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NATIONAL UNITY

IN THE

GERMAN NOVEL BEFORE 1870

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National Unity in the German Novel Before 1870.

Since the days of Tacitus the German people have shown a traditional incapacity for united action. Political unity was for them a "blue flower" which for centuries deceived them with its "delusive presence" and its "intoxicating fragrance." The humiliation brought upon the nation by the destruction of the last remnants of the Holy Roman Empire through Napoleon at the beginning of the nineteenth century was the inevitable result of centuries of disunion. The outburst of patriotic feeling which came with the War for Liberation aroused anew the desire for unity. Yet for almost seven decades the nation dreamed and fought and bled for it, until under the skilled hand of the Iron Chancellor the dream of centuries was realized, and to-day the Germans, a united nation, hail a German Emperor.

The slow process by which this unity was finally evolved has already received adequate treatment in our historical literature. The documentary evidences have received their best treatment in Sybel's *The Founding of the German Empire,* in Treitschke's *Deutsche Geschichte im 19. Jahrhundert,* in Jastrow's *Geschichte des deutschen Einheitstraumes und seine Erfüllung,* and partial treatment in the uncompleted work of Grotte *Geschichte der deutschen Einheitsbewegung im 19. Jahrhundert.* These books touch in a very superficial way only the growth of the idea of German unity among the people at large, in their literature and philosophy. Of especial value in this respect is *L'Allemagne depuis Leibnitz. Essai sur le développement de la conscience nationale en Allemagne,* by L. Levy-Bruhl. The treatment is of a general character but the author has outlined in a clear and scholarly manner the elements in the life, philosophy and literature of the German people that prepared the way for German patriotism and eventually German unity in 1871.

The following paper is an attempt to notice in a somewhat more detailed way the treatment given German unity in the novel of the century up to 1870, after which date the question

ceased to interest the poet's imagination. The treatment is not intended to be exhaustive as only those novels are treated which were within the writer's reach. A vast amount of valuable material is contained in those novels of the century which have long since been forgotten, are not on the book market, and are not in our American libraries. Such material can be available only after a careful search among the larger and older circulating libraries of Germany. The task of collecting such material will be a long and tiresome one, but the results ought to form an interesting chapter in the history of the German people during the nineteenth century.

To the lack of national political unity is due in large measure the absence for centuries of the patriotic element in German literature. Not until Frederick the Great began his struggle against the Austrian paternal government, thus taking the first step against the old order of things, does the literature begin to reflect an interest in the affairs of state. This newly aroused interest revealed itself in a certain enthusiasm for a vague idea of native country, in dreams rather than concrete pictures, in indistinct desires rather than definitely planned actions. This so-called "Deutschtümelei" found literary expression in the Göttingen circle and in the works of Klopstock and his followers.

This patriotic literature however lacked an adequate foundation. The nation had lost touch with its past, and it was but natural that the awakened feeling should assume a crude and fantastic form, or else grow into a vague cosmopolitanism which caused the Germans to lose sight of the rightful position of their nation in the future history of Europe. This condition of affairs lasted, with a few exceptions, until the later Romanticists had delved deep into the German past, had caught a glimpse of the ancient glory of the nation, an appreciation of the sublime greatness of the national heroes and so laid the foundation for all patriotic literature. The disgrace of 1806 put an end in great measure to cosmopolitanism and caused the people to centre their thoughts upon their own national life and duties, while the ancient splendor and apparent unity of the race became an ideal for which they could strive.

But before this rude awakening there were a few poets who, with a vision more keen than the others, had seen the drift of affairs, had lifted their warning voices and pleaded for political unity. Herder, for example, who had not hesitated to ridicule Klopstock's vague sentimental ideas of native country, sounded a warning note and a plea for unity in his odes "To the Emperor," "To Ambition," and "To Germania." The early experiences of Schiller had not been such as to engender in him a deep love of country, yet he too gradually freed himself from his cosmopolitan tendencies, so that to-day the Germans, with a few exceptions, accept his later works as coming from a truly patriotic heart. His ardent plea for unity through the dying Attinghausen,

"Seid einig——einig——einig"

stamped him in the popular mind of the nineteenth century as a patriot who saw the need of political unity.

The novel had not responded to any sort of patriotic sentiment. The "Staatsroman" had found writers and readers ever since Opitz had set the fashion by translating Barclay's *Argenis* (1621). Political and social conditions were reflected to some extent in the works of Grimmelshausen, Christian Weise, the Robinsonaden, and the various Utopian novels, but a true German patriotic tendency was entirely lacking. During the second half of the eighteenth century the writers of romance chose as a rule themes in which patriotism and political questions had no place. The novels of Goethe, Jean Paul, and the radical Romanticists, with the exception of Tieck in his later works, treated with fullness of detail the inner life of the individual and occasionally the relation of the individual to the social body, but they did not trouble themselves about the life of the individual in its relation to the state or public affairs. And so it was that the novel at the beginning of the century was of such a nature that it was not and could not be the bearer of any serious patriotic message.

The character of the novel changed but little during the first fifteen years of the new century. During this time there was not produced a single patriotic novel worthy of the name, and very few that in any way touched on political questions. The new

questions of civic duty which had been forced upon the attention of the people by the victories of Napoleon were too new for any such treatment as would be required in the novel. It was rather a period devoted to the agitators, who, like Fichte, Arndt, Jahn and others sought to put new ideals and new hopes into the downcast German spirit, or to the dramaticists, who, like Kleist, put their ideal patriot on the stage, or finally to the singers who like Arndt, Körner, Schenkendorf and others tried to express their vague ideas of patriotism and political unity in lyric verse in an effort to fire the sluggish spirits into some semblance of life.

The second decade saw German arms triumph over French tyranny and part of the German soil freed from the hated enemy. The call to arms against the common enemy had filled the people with a renewed sense of their unity and, after the glorious conclusion of the war, everyone looked forward to a speedy realization of the dream. As early as 1812 Stein had sketched a plan for the reunion of the scattered parts of the former German empire, and both Arndt and Görres had given public expression to the same idea. But all remained without result. Then followed at once the period of gloomy reaction, replete with deceived hopes for the patriots who had risked their lifeblood on the battle field, and marked by almost unexampled political procrastination on the part of the leaders. In the hands of great and unselfish statesmen it seems that the dream of national unity might have been realized in fact. However the Congress of Vienna left only a federation of states as disjointed and weak as the old empire, bound together by no firm tie and regarded with contempt by their more powerful neighbors. Royal promises were forgotten and the few bold spirits who ventured to demand their fulfillment were suppressed.

Deceived in their hopes and excluded from participation in the life of the state, a large part of the people dropped back into indifference or squandered their thoughts on a fanciful cosmopolitanism. Others inspired by an interest in political liberty rather than in German unity, an interest caused by the growing hatred of the two absolutist powers, Austria and Prussia, trans-

ferred their enthusiasm and sympathy to the nations that were defending their liberty, such as Greece, Poland or even France. The truly patriotic German spirit however found a refuge and expression in the affiliated student unions or "Burschenschaften" which were made up for the most part of the young men who had fought in the war for independence. In their enthusiasm they were prone to excesses, and in their ideal dreams they were fanciful, but to them Germany owes a debt of gratitude for preserving in those gloomy decades the spirit which in the end was to aid so much in the achievement of unity. Their public life was short. Organized June 12, 1815, the innocent Wartburg festival and the insane act of Sand brought the order to disband and prepared persecution and imprisonment for the members in the years to come.

The popularity of the martial lyrics also served to keep alive the patriotic sentiment. The poets and singers during the years of the war were filled with an ardent patriotism which not only gave expression to a righteous anger against the oppressors but also deplored the destroyed majesty of the German realm, and looked hopefully forward to a united kingdom. They urged all who spoke the German tongue to offer their lifeblood for the freedom and independence of the fatherland. Arndt, Körner, Schenkendorf, Rückert and Uhland sang of liberty and unity, cheered the soldiers on to victory, and encouraged the downcast spirits during the gloomy days of reaction. They themselves perhaps did not realize the significance of their song, their plans for the proposed unity were vague and often impossible, yet for sincerity of purpose and patriotic enthusiasm their lyrics stand unsurpassed in German patriotic literature.

These two decades show little progress in the building up of a healthy patriotic novel, but they were decades of vast significance for the future patriotic literature. The historical novel as we now know it was up to 1815 almost unknown. There was no foundation for it either in content or form. The first three decades of the century produced these two important elements and so prepared the way for the patriotic novel of the remainder of the century.

Ever since the days of Bodmer there had been a growing interest in the literary achievements of the past ages, and through Herder, Goethe, and Schiller this interest had been extended to the life and personalities of the peoples of the past. This movement reached its height during the early decades of the new century; the literary interest, in the works of Arnim and Brentano, Schlegel, the brothers Grimm and other linguistic investigators; the social and political interest, in the novels of the Romanticists and in the novels of chivalry. The people again became acquainted with the past of their nation and this interest led to renewed investigation and study. And so it came about that a vast amount of material was brought to light for the use of the future historical and patrotic novel writer.

Now that the subject matter was provided, the form and style became the prime requisite. The old type of novel was in no way suitable as a mould for this new subject matter. Fortunately, at this time the works of the great Scotchman were introduced into Germany and found ready acceptance. Scott is with justice called the father of the national novel along historical lines in German literature. Although imitation began at once the full fruit of the movement was to come to fruition only in the next generation. The early imitators such as Hauff and the early efforts of Alexis do not yet show an appreciation of the real significance of the Scotchman's style. The movement was checked for a time by the Young German revolution, and it was not until near the end of the fourth decade that the novel after the model of Scott began a new development that was to lead to the great works of Alexis, Scheffel and Freytag, the best the century has to offer.

At this time too the peasant novel was just beginning to show the world the beauty and vigor of the German peasant life. This type of novel however was essentially provincial in contents and was not then and never was the bearer of a national or patriotic message.

During these two decades then we must look chiefly to the Romantic novelists for whatever patriotic tendency found expression.

It is a well recognized paradox that although the Germans first became acquainted through the Romanticists with their historical past and thus laid a solid foundation for future political hopes and ideals, these Romanticists were by nature not in sympathy with political affairs. They looked upon political agitation as meaning sure death to true poetry, as leading away from the fullness of inner life which was in their opinion necessary to true poetry. The momentous events of the day however could not be disregarded and gradually the school was forced more and more out of the ideal world and began to take an interest in the political life about them.

The position taken by the Romanticists toward national questions in general and political unity in particular grew out of three chief characteristics of the school; their admiration for and belief in the ego; their deep love for mediaeval German life and institutions; their deeply religious sense which could not separate the state from the church.

The school inherited from the previous century an intense admiration of the individual, his freedom, his power, his self-sufficiency and his right to mould his surroundings to suit his own inherent requirements. This view had grown up gradually through the activity of Lessing, Herder, Goethe and Schiller, and had received concrete expression in the philosophy of Fichte. When applied to the political situation, especially to German unity, the province, or the division of the race within certain boundaries, took the place of the individual, and just as there was an individual dissimilarity, so there was a provincial dissimilarity which must under no circumstances be destroyed. As formulated by Görres, each province had its own inherent character which was as indestructible as the inherent character of the individual. It was natural then that the Romanticists could not be in favor of any centralized state that suppressed one state in favor of some other dominating state and so threaten to destroy racial or provincial pecularities.

This idea was the first to suffer attack and destruction. The demand made upon the individual and the petty state that individual freedom should be sacrificed for the sake of adding to the

power of the whole was soon recognized. In the succeeding decades this conviction won its way over all obstacles. It found its best literary expression in Spielhagen's *In Reih und Glied,* and its political expression in the work of Bismarck.

The only sort of state which would not destroy the peculiarities and independence of the individual parts was a confederation of states, or state's union. This was closely associated with the second characteristic of the Romantic School—the love for the historic institutions of the middle ages. The state was regarded as a living organism with limbs which to a certain extent had their individual life. This organism had its roots deep in the past history of the race, and the only safe method of procedure was a revival of old forms. Among these old forms, the old state's union of the middle ages, with its wealth of types, its versatility, its individuality, even its chaotic confusion appealed to the Romantic mind and became an ideal.

Hand in hand with this idea of state's union went the third characteristic—the close relation of state and church. Again the middle ages with the close union of church and state, emperor and pope became an ideal. The church was looked upon as the foundation of science, art, and civic life. Many like Görres believed that the church was the only power capable of defending the liberty of the people from the encroachments of absolutism. Hence it was that in all plans for future unity the church was at least to be coördinate and not subordinate to the state.

These characteristics can be noticed in the two Romantic novels of this period that in any way approach a national patriotic character, touch on political questions and incidentally treat German unity—Eichendorf's *Ahnung und Gegenwart* (1815) and Arnim's *Die Kronenwächter* (1817). The former is an example of the historical novel of the older type, the latter begins to show a slight Scottian influence.

In a letter to Foucqué (Feb. 3, 1814) concerning his novel Eichendorf confesses that great events have followed each other in such rapid succession, everything was so uncertain and without form that it was impossible to arrive at any calm conclusion. However he would so gladly do what he could to help the Ger-

mans become a nation. With this confession on the part of the author, it is evident that he could not understand the present and that his estimate of the future would be vague and uncertain.

The inability of the Romantic mind to cope with the trend of affairs is seen distinctly enough in the two chief characters, Leontin and Frederick. Leontin feels deeply the depression of the times, but confesses he is unable to do anything to change conditions.[1] He falls into despair, and finally sails away over the sea to unknown regions of future activity.

Frederick arrives in a large city, and amidst its active life he believes he sees conditions in their true light.[2] The great spectacle of metropolitan life, the terrible onward rush of events, which had not left the better minds unmoved, suddenly unites into a great stream all his powers which had been wont to play like a happy fountain. The false, cowardly poets who, in the face of a momentous future, spend their time in idle play became disgusting to him. His volatile superficial love changed into a holy love and enthusiasm for a definite and fixed purpose. Much that in the past had caused him anxiety was now forgotten. He became more mature and independent concerning his judgment of the world. He was no longer satisfied with himself and his own interests, but would make a better use of his life. When he makes the attempt however he finds to his sorrow that there is no field in which he can make himself useful. With infinite selfsacrifice he begins a feverish study of the state. All his mind and all his thoughts are centered in his fatherland. But all his interest and all his thinking bring nothing to light. He enters the Tyrolese war, not from any firm conviction concerning the principles involved, but chiefly because he happens to be there. In the end he knows of no way of giving Germany her unity, honor and freedom except through the church.[3] Accordingly he enters a convent to prepare for the task.

Quite a step in advance can be noticed in the style of Arnim's *Kronenwächter*. Showing the hand of the true artist and poet,

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[1] *Ahnung und Gegenwart*, Dietz, p. 176.
[2] *Ibid*, 174f.
[3] *Ibid*, p. 299f.

he attempts to unroll a magnificent picture of the middle ages with its wealth of figures and life, at the same time keeping in the background the conditions in Germany in his own day. Unfortunately Arnim was not able to carry the sound common sense of his everyday life into his work, and the traditional Romantic faults are found everywhere; frequent digressions, interpolated tales, fantastic and impossible episodes, and in the end an incomplete fragment.

The splendor of the ancient realm under Barbarossa had become an ideal for many of the Romantic minds, and soon the longing for a united fatherland associated itself with the myth of the Kyffhäuser mountains. Here guarded by ravens the patron saint of nationality sat, awaiting the time when he should come forth and establish the nation in all its old time glory. Many echoes of this myth are found in Arnim's story. He depicts the crown as guarded by a secret club. The members are hostile to the reigning house of Hapsburg, because the rulers of this house have proved unworthy of the task assigned them. The club seeks to rear as suitable rulers of the future realm the Hohenstaufen heirs. Accordingly one of these heirs is put in an environment where he is counseled and watched over by the mythical Barbarossa. Apparently however through moral guilt these heirs prove themselves unworthy of the trust placed in them. They die and the fragment closes without having the crown won from its strange guards in a glass castle in the middle of the sea.

How did Arnim intend that the crown should be won and Germany united? The solution of the question so far as it can be determined by the scant outline left by Arnim is still a matter of dispute. Dohmke [4] believes that he intended to let the crown be divided (the old curse of Germany). When the parts were again united it was to be a new dawn for a new Germany. Mielke [5] would see in the scant outline that it was all to end in an allegory which was intended to show that the crown of Germany was to be gained only in a spiritual way; Germany's

[4] Introduction to Cotta edition.

[5] Mielke, *Der deutsche Roman im 19. Jahrdt.*, p. 62.

power purely intellectual, and the bearer of the crown an allegorical puppet. For our purpose it makes little difference which is correct. Either one shows that Arnim had no definite solution and so carried it into the realm of dream and speculation. How far the fact that he had no definite solution encouraged him to leave the novel unfinished has not yet been shown.

Isolated references to unity within the novel are just as fragmentary and equally uncertain.

Amidst the ruins of the ancient castle of Barbarossa, Berthold falls asleep. The old king appears suddenly before him and leads him into a magnificent hall. In the middle of the hall is a coffin, containing three crowned figures. As Berthold draws near, all suddenly change into a miniature model of the ancient structure which he is to build up again and in which he is to reign successfully and happily over a united realm. Afterwards the ruins are about to be sold at auction, but Berthold, so filled with confidence in his future mission, bids beyond his slender means for its possession. In his hour of need Barbarossa again appears before him in a dream and discloses the hiding place of a large treasure which enables Berthold to redeem his promise and pay for the ruins. Up to this point all is excellent Romantic symbolism. On the sight of the ruins he builds, according to the plans Barbarossa gives him, a structure and then it becomes—a cloth weaving establishment. Is this a prophetic glance into the future commercial Germany and the unifying power of commercial interests or is it Romantic inconsistency?

Arnim however was dreaming of unity even though he may not have had a very definite idea of how it was to be realized. Inherited pride and hostility are to him the chief causes of disunion.[6] Undue pride of princely power causes the disunion between the states, and at the same time causes disunion between the princes and the people. No race is to vanish from the earth but peace is to come only when hostile families are reconciled and united.[7] The houses of Hohenstaufen and Hapsburg however have ever been hostile to each other and no unity seems possible

[6] *Die Kronenwächter*, p. 124.
[7] *Ibid*, p. 33.

between them.[8] Under these conditions Arnim like Perthes, Fries, and other Romantic reactionists, looks for unity to be possible only through the people, the great middle class, and not through any one princely house taking the lead.[9] In this struggle no support was to be expected from the nobles, because they consider only their own selfish interests while history pointed the way to a nation in which every individual should subordinate himself for the good of all. Finally when the movement was started the church was to go hand in hand with the state.

With the exception of Ludwig Tieck, the Romantic novelette writers show in their works little or no tendency to draw material from their contemporary political world. He, above all his contemporaries in the Romantic school, has a fairly clear vision of the actual political conditions, and with a keen insight shows at times a clear understanding of the trend of affairs. He does not make any definite political propaganda, but here and there one catches sight of a personality interested in German unity.

Speaking through the Colonel in *Gesellschaft auf dem Lande* (1825) he recognizes the debt which Prussia owes to Frederick the Great in putting the German realm on a solid foundation, so that, though divided, it might better work and flourish.[10] At the same time he sees a future day when the German states will become a united realm in the defense of their country against a foreign foe. The recent war had aroused this impression in the minds of many, but it was not until the popular enthusiasm of 1870-71 that it was to be realized.

In his later years Tieck seems to have been unable to adapt himself to the times and to understand the trend of affairs. In *Der Wassermensch* (1835) he brands the wild enthusiasm and indefinite plans of the younger generation as madness.[11] The Privy Counselor is here the bearer of Tieck's message. The young men who had fought for their country had expected to see their dream of political unity realized at once; they had dis-

[8] *Ibid*, p. 248
[9] *Ibid*, p. 132.
[10] *Gesellschaft auf dem Lande*, p. 467.
[11] *Der Wassermensch*, p. 56.

regarded wisdom, politics and prudence, and had not taken into consideration the forces at work, or the means at their command. The result had been the formation of dangerous clubs and insane demonstrations. To be successful it was necessary that they have a definite goal, that they should not shun the slow, toilsome labor necessary to reach it. He deplores the fact that the ideas of Görres, Arndt, Steffens and even the peculiar Jahn had ceased to find sympathetic acceptation and were regarded by the new generation as antiquated and even over patriotic. The Privy Counselor expects to see the dream realized under a true German king who with true religious consecration should protect the masses from the greedy encroachment of the nobles, the radical plans of the demagogues, and the inane theories of the mundane philosophers.[12] Although he nowhere in his story mentions it, he expects this German king to come from the house of the Hohenzollern.

In his youth William Hauff had been an enthusiastic member of the student corps and a few of his patriotic songs were heard at the Wartburg Festival. In common with his student friends he too was an advocate of national unity and like them had no definite plan for its attainment. In *Lichtenstein* (1826), the first serious attempt to produce a historical novel after the model of Scott, he scarcely touches that matter at all. The worthy old Lichtenstein complains to the Chancellor that he is treating the land like a piece of leather.[13] "Any fool can cut it to pieces, but who in the wide world can put it together again."

The thought of national unity finds a larger place in Hauff's *Das Bild des Kaisers* (1826). Although the scene of it is laid in Swabia he has his eye on Germany as a whole, and accents the idea that local patriotism and pride have been the chief causes of disunion. He causes his hero, the Brandenburg patriot Albert, to visit Swabia, and so portrays the clash of opinions between the North and the South. Hauff shows his own Swabian patriotism by endowing his countrymen with the wider view, with more

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[12] *Ibid*, p. 52.
[13] *Lichtenstein*, Cotta text, p. 269.

sympathetic sentiments and with more national and patriotic feelings.

Albert is accused of being not a German but a Prussian. A stranger cautions him [14] not to show it while in the thoroughly German Swabia. He however forgets himself and praises his Prussia to Baron Tierberg. The old gentleman voices his opinion in no uncertain tone.[15] He points out to Albert that all the disaster and suffering which had come upon Germany was due to lack of unity and to too much local patriotism. "Oh, Germany, Germany! There one can see how all this misery has come from their own disunion. We were no longer Greeks, but Corinthians, Athenians, and even Spartans!" And then to Prussia: "You, you alone are to blame. You would have long ago separated from the realm, you no longer had a heart for the common good. You would have gladly seen us broken piece by piece, because we were feared so long as we were united. Do you not know what happened in Sparta when every Greek was looked upon as a foreigner? A curse upon this century of selfishness and disunion! A curse upon this world of fools who call selfishness and ambition greatness!"

The other characters claim our attention as typical of men of that day. The elder Willi is one of those who lost all sense of German patriotism in blind admiration of genius; in this case the genius of Napoleon. He will hear nothing of German unity and disparages the self-sacrifice of the people in the war for liberation. His son represents the demagogue who risked his life and liberty for the principles he believes right, although he has no clear conception of this principles and does not realize where they will lead him and his country. After a brief encounter with the police he loses some of his enthusiasm, and begins to see that violent measures can do nothing.

The next period was ushered in by the July Revolution in France and closed with the failure of the civic uprising in 1848. The intervening years, while comparatively free from momentous

[14] *Ibid*, p. 11
[15] *Ibid*, p. 23.

political events, were years of civic unrest. In 1848 national unity seemed no nearer its realization than twenty years before, yet real progress had been made. The Frankfurt Parliament, the seeming failure of which had been the chief cause of the Revolution, had in reality prepared the way for Prussian leadership in states union.

Economic conditions in Germany made vast strides during these decades and in turn had a noticeable effect on political affairs. The rapid development of the railroad and steamboat traffic, coupled with a desire for travel, brought the German people in contact with each other and they began to realize more and more the unity of their race. The relation of the railroads and unity finds a characteristic expression in the song of Karl Beck:

"Diese Schienen, Hochzeitsbänder,
Trauungsringe, blank gegossen,
Liebend tauschen sie die Länder
Und die Ehe wird geschlossen."

The Customs Union of Prussia had been an important step towards unification, although its influence was not felt so strongly at the time, and it did not appeal as such to the popular mind. It had been brought about through a mutual agreement with the neighboring states and soon included all the non-Austrian states. The financial and commercial advantage of the Union soon recommended it to all and soon states nominally under the leadership of Austria applied for admission and were accepted, and thus entered into a commercial union with Prussia. While every notion of political union was carefully avoided, the whole movement could only serve to strengthen the desire for political centralization.

During the preceding decade the idea of German unity had ceased to interest the masses and national feeling existed only in the hearts of a few patriots. Civic discontent existed everywhere but was held in check by the strong hand of the Metternich police. The news of the July Revolution in Paris came like the bright sunshine into the gloomy days of reaction. A new springtime seemed to be at hand in the political and intellectual life of

the people. Many states demanded constitutional privileges, and, amidst the terror which seized the petty courts, received or forced their demands. Prussia and Austria were able to suppress the masses and no widespread outbreak occurred in these states. Gradually however the old police state was again everywhere master of the situation, and the rights and freedom gained were declared null and void. In spite of its failure however a new spirit had been developed. Public interest had again been aroused in political and social affairs, and soon there was developed a well defined public opinion on civic matters and with it public life entered into a new period of growth.

The vague dreams of political unity that had been current during the previous decades now gave way to a serious consideration of the problem. It was no longer a superficial enthusiasm without positive ideas or plans. Much that was proposed may not have been practicable, but it was an eloquent indication of the attempts to deal with the problem in a serious way. It is astonishing how much practical political wisdom and insight came rapidly to the front to solve, through peaceful means, the problem before the nation. The conflicting views and purposes of the numerous leaders and parties have become a matter of history. Public opinion gave its approval and support to the ideas of Gagern, Pfitzer, Münch, and Gutzkow, who sought to bring about states union under the leadership of Prussia, through a mutual understanding and without doing violence to the government of the individual states. This activity brought no immediate fruit, except persecution for the authors, but it did show the people the real difficulties to be overcome and put an end largely to the vague and often inane dreams of the preceding decades.

The Romantic literature of these decades had, as we have seen, not reflected to any great extent existing political and social conditions. The new spirit however now demanded that all phases of modern life should find an expression in the literature of the day. The program of Young Germany proclaimed that literature should again be united with life and the idea with the world. As it became more and more evident that the governments would not allow any active participation in state affairs, the

political movement turned to literature, and literature became the field in which not only social and ecclesiastic warfare but also political propaganda was waged. Gutzkow, Börne and Laube all believed that literature should be the organ for disseminating the new ideas, the representative of the nation's interests, and a means of educating the people for the enjoyment of future civic privileges in a free and united fatherland.

The governments soon recognized the danger of the new spirit and sought to curb it through edicts and more stringent press laws. The ruthless persecution dampened the ardor of many and they gave up political agitation for the less dangerous one of social and church affairs. Still others followed the model of Börne and were soon skilled in the smuggling in of political ideas under the guise of literary and aesthetic criticism.

The novel was granted a much higher rank than had been granted it during the former period, due in large measure to the firm belief on the part of the Young Germans in the superiority of prose. In this phase of literature two models now incited to imitation and development, Walter Scott and Goethe, resulting in three types of novel, the historical novel, the historical-tendenz novel, and the "Zeitroman."

During the previous decades Hauff had attempted to imitate Scott, but he had not discovered the true secret of the Scotchman's success or its ultimate lesson for the German novel. The disunion of Germany was in itself a hindrance to a successful national novel of this type. It was not until Prussia became more and more the hope of Germany in future unity that an Alexis perceived in this state the unit type of democratic government, and the story of Prussian growth as typical of German history. Thus only could the approach be made to the conditions necessary for a historical novel of the Scott type and a model set which was only surpassed by a Freytag who, after the nation had become united, could write for Germany what Alexis had written for Brandenburg.

The tendency to introduce modern life with its manifold problems into literature had been evident to a certain extent during the previous period. The novels of Goethe had brought

society, its problems and its environments into literature. Tieck and others had followed him to some extent. These novels however treated only those problems that seemed to the authors to be of a poetic nature, and so excluded a number of the phases of public life. The new spirit of the third decade, while accepting this, made the additional demand that every phase of life should be considered. With the introduction into the novel of questions concerning political, church and social affairs the "Zeitroman" had its beginnings. It was so peculiarly adapted to the purpose of disseminating the many problems of the day that it soon became the foremost type of novel. Developed by Immermann, Gutzkow and Laube, it became realistic under Auerbach and Spielhagen and reached its highest success.

With justice Schenkendorf has been called "Der Kaiserherold," the herald of the old emperor of the old empire, and with equal justice Alexis deserves the title of "Der Herold des Neuen Kaisers," the herald of the new emperor of the new empire. He had fought for his country, a copy of the *Niebelungen Lay* in his pocket, had formed a "Hermannbund" among his fellow soldiers and had been a close student of Fichte, Arndt and Körner. After the war he laid aside his sword and took up the pen to work for the cause of his country and his emperor. As a reward he was treated with indifference by his contemporaries and received that seemingly unjust and uncalled for reprimand from the emperor he had tried to serve. Perhaps no writer of the century tried more earnestly to help Prussia in the struggle for leadership in Germany, and no writer received so sorry a reward from people and prince. Blind physically and mentally, an ironical fate willed it that the broken body should live on until the German unity under Prussia for which he had struggled had been attained in 1871, but unfortunately the mind could no longer comprehend it. The spirit which animated Alexis in the years of struggle and disappointment is nowhere better expressed than in the words he has given Stephan in *Cabanis:*[16] "There is nothing higher than one's country. True

[16] Weichert edition, III, p. 356.

to it to my last breath whether the reward be thanks or scorn; true to it as long as I can lift my arm, or move my tongue; ever striving, whether at the front or in some distant obscure nook—only thus can I prove myself worthy." The proper recognition of his activity dawned gradually only on the German people, and not until the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of his birth do they set to him in their critical literature a monument worthy of his activity.

The general trend of his political opinions changed but little during the years of his activity. To this fact is due in large measure the weakness of his later novels. In *Mein politisches Bekentniss* (1833) [17] he confesses himself a Royalist in favor of hereditary monarchy. In this he saw the surest guarantee of prosperity, equality and freedom. This monarchy was not however to be a mere apparent monarchy, not a mere hereditary presidency, but endowed with the necessary power and prestige to accomplish the task before it. Under the present condition of society he regarded a real republic as impossible and entirely unworthy of consideration for Germany. He likewise considered the sovereignty of the people as an idle fancy, as it must always lack unity of purpose. An absolute monarchy in which the whims of the ruler were the highest laws could exist just as little as a real republic. Whether this monarchy should be constitutional or not should depend on the ablility of the people and whether it could be introduced naturally. He deplores the lack of unity between North and South. The sectional strife seems to him to have developed through ignorance or envy, and to have been fanned into flame by a continually perverse interpretation of the good intentions of the North. This spirit if it continued to grow threatened to become far more dangerous to ideal unity than any political dismemberment.

In his earlier short stories, *Das Haus Düsterweg* and *Herr von Sacken,* Alexis pays homage to the spirit that animated Young Germany. The first has been justly named by Tschirch [18] a political and personal confession of the poet. He there con-

[17] Published in *Wiener Bilder,* p. 426.

[18] *Brandenburg-Preuss. Gesch.* XIII, 526.

demns the vain and useless efforts of the young enthusiasts to gain their political purposes through violence.[19] And yet he can only deplore the ruthless persecution of these young spirits by the state. Though their plans were visionary and their desires often revolutionary the state was in no danger from them. If persecution had not made martyrs of them, popular ridicule would have soon brought them to reason.

For the attainment of unity he advocates the sacrifice of individual interests for the good of all. Old quarrels should be forgotten and all strive together in harmony. He gives this idea symbolic expression in Prince Guidos dream of the quarrel between the giants and the dwarfs.[20] The decrepit old graybeard voices his appeal to the assembled company: "We are not assembled here to awaken anew the old quarrels that brought us servitude. It came upon us because there was no one who would sacrifice his own interests. Have we not already paid dearly for our sin? Let us bury the memory of old quarrels in the empty graves from which avarice threw the bones of our fathers. Cursed be he who asks, was your father a dwarf or a giant! Instead let there be this quality among us, that we hate our oppressors and desire one and all to become a united people."

In the second novelette much the same spirit prevails. Here he especially cautions the nation that whatever is done must be done through their own might and their own perseverance. Success through foreign help is worse than servitude.[21] "We are a chain of interwoven links and we desire none of foreign make. What is then our fatherland? Is it perhaps that strip of land which our good sword-girt fathers gained on desert strand, a strand separated from the cradle of our ancestors by all hindering seas, mountains and woods? No! and again No! The remembrance of our origin, that is for us our country. Through that only can we hold closely and proudly to one another in pure blood and pure language. Through this Shiboleth we protect ourselves against the lot that has befallen so many nations,

[19] *Haus Düsterweg*, pp. 119, 147, 176.
[20] *Ibid*, III, p. 153.
[21] *Herr von Sacken, Novellenschatz*, p. 116.

against dissolution, incorporation and subjugation by barbarians. We no longer bear coats of mail, but let this thought be the anointing oil on which the foreign elements, that would touch us, may glide off and do us no harm."

The merits and faults of Alexis' great series of Brandenburg stories have received complete treatment in our critical literature and do not need to be noticed here. Scott had set in his novels a monument to the heroes of his native country. As Alexis looked into the past of his country, Brandenburg, he saw a vigorous people whose lives told an eloquent story of struggle for existence, freedom and civic growth. Then with warm patriotic heart he unrolled in his novels a "poetic biography of Brandenburg." But it is not only Prussia-Brandenburg he had in view. In *Der Falsche Woldemar* we read his purpose:[22] "Because I tell you Brandenburg stories, some of you may exclaim, 'Why should you bother about the German eagle! Let it fly, you say, and stick to your country.' But, I cannot. For Brandenburg was, methinks, but a member of the great German body, and, so God wills, shall ever remain so. What disrupts Germany, disrupts it. What lifts Germany, shall also lift it. I tell you Brandenburg stories, but methinks they are German stories. For the trials of Brandenburg were the trials of the German empire, rent its heart and sucked its lifeblood. In those days disloyalty and deception began and the cunning art of double-tongued speech. Honeyed words glossed over a bad business that the countries might be deceived. and the deeds of the great reacted upon the small. And so, dear reader, I lead you from the Mark out into the realm, for the little play here became there a momentous struggle."

He began the series with *Cabanis* in 1832. The Young German agitation, however, caused the novel to pass almost unnoticed. After joining the movement for a while in his short stories, Alexis again returned to the series in *Der Roland von Berlin* in 1840. The remainder of the series then appeared in rapid succession: *Der Falsche Woldemar* in 1842, *Die Hosen*

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[22] *Der Falsche Woldemar* II, 212.

des Herrn von Bredow in 1846, and its sequel *Der Werwolf* in 1848; *Ruhe ist die erste Bürgerpflicht* in 1852; *Isigrimm* in 1854, and *Dorothee* in 1856.

The statement made by various critics, among them Mielke,[28] that Alexis has few references to the problems of his day, except in *Isigrimm,* is certainly not true as regards German unity. Though giving us pictures from the past history of Prussia, he continually had his eye on the present condition and future promise of that state. He shows how a vigorous people had changed a sandy desert into a prosperous and well-governed state, and how these same forces must give that state a leading part in the future states union. At the same time he did not hesitate to point out the mistakes which the house of the Hohenzollern had made in the past, and the faults which were still their inheritance. This is done to such a marked degree that one may well believe that the seemingly unwarranted reprimand of Frederick William was caused by more than a passing vexation at Alexis for condemning the king's refusal of the crown offered him by the Frankfurt Assembly.

It is a noticeable fact that the periods which Alexis has chosen as a background for the activity of the Brandenburg patriots and people are in themselves characteristic periods in the growth of centralized government.

First in the chronicle of Brandenburg comes the *Der Falsche Woldemar,* depicting the struggle of his country during the first half of the fourteenth century. At the death of the real Woldemar the well-governed realm had fallen back into desolation, hopeless disorder and abject fear. Like the mythical Barbarossa, the old Woldemar apparently comes to life again, brings splendor and unity to the state and freedom to the people from oppression within and without. Only when he loses confidence in himself and his work does he find himself forced to confess the deception. "Thus Alexis made it appear that even in the earliest days of autocratic rule popular instincts coupled the right to rule with a duty to the people and that it preferred a

[28] Mielke, *Der Deutsche Roman,* p. 166.

technically illegitimate rule which recognized this rule to a reign punctilious in its claims to legitimacy, but unscrupulous in its disregard of its duty to the people."[24]

The opening chapters show how the people of the Mark had struggled with the sands and the swamps until a vigorous people and a prosperous country had been developed. "Brandenburg has not become great through treasures, not through the wealth of a fruitful soil, not through trade, but through perseverance in times of misfortune. Defeated, exiled, half destroyed, it always again arose in its old power with firm confidence in its God and in its destiny. In times of need there always came the right hero, who brought delivery when all seemed lost. Such a hero was the great Elector Frederick William, who found a desolate realm and a demoralized people, and left a young state full of life, and a people filled with hope and faith. Such a hero was Frederick, often great, but peculiar in the indomitable power of overcoming misfortune. Such heroes were Stein and Hardenberg, who saw the needs of their time and were not frightened by the phantoms of the giants, or the cry of the petty great ones. Such a hero was Woldemar. Not all heroes are perpetuated in bronze and marble, not every name is remembered in song, but it is not less my duty to recall with honor and love those leaders who made it possible for us to remain a German people and to become a German nation."[25]

He shows how, during the time depicted in the novel, Ludwig had good intentions and that Germany had had worse emperors, but the times were bad and the great band of unity was destroyed. Prince and petty ruler thought more of their own selfish interests than of the weal of the fatherland. The defeats of Prenzlau and Kremmen had then brought suppression and disunion into the realm for the next five hundred years.

The numerous appeals for unity may be briefly condensed under a few general heads. He points out that great princes and leaders are the prime requisite for unity,[26] and that for success

[24] Coar, *Studies in German Literature*, p. 280.
[25] *Der Falsche Woldemar*, Reclam. I, 9f.
[26] *Ibid*, I, 99, 269, 299; II, 190.

these princes and leaders must take into consideration the wishes, demands and welfare of the people.[27] No unity is possible where the princes and people as well think only of themselves and are not ready to make the necessary personal sacrifices.[28] Each, whether great or small, must cast whatever he has into the balance for the common good.[29] One resisting member can destroy every endeavor.[30] Unity through force of arms had in the past proved a failure, so now it must be attained through wisdom and diplomacy.[31] Where through past efforts unification had been attained, future efforts should be directed to preserving it. Existing realms should not be divided, for the loss of a single state means eventual dismemberment, and a dual government means turmoil and strife.[32] In times of unrest no single power is strong enough to stand alone, but in unity there is political strength.[33] Germany needs to be united to protect it from its enemies to the east and west. "The German eagle has two heads. One was intended to watch the East and the other the West, and the one was to keep the other awake. Once when he slept, or had both heads turned in the same direction, the enemy came and robbed him of some of his feathers. Others believe he has two heads because the Germans were always at discord, at variance concerning their rights and freedom. One wished to go to the right, the other to the left. So it was that they did not move forward, but remained behind their neighbors. Still others think the double eagle means rival emperors who fought for the crown, each believing himself in the right. The German eagle is still double-headed. God grant, however, that it keep a single body and a single heart. Now that we know what came of it that the one nodded and the other only watched, may God grant that it continually look to the east and west with both heads."[34]

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[27] *Ibid,* II, 333.
[28] *Ibid,* I, 135, 214, 264, 317f; II, 31.
[29] *Ibid,* I, 299; II, 31, 46f.
[30] *Ibid,* I, 273.
[31] *Ibid,* I, 309.
[32] *Ibid,* I, 271, 307f; II, 210, 226.
[33] *Ibid,* I, 309; II, 50, 58, 86, 129.
[34] *Ibid,* II, 211.

The next novel, *Der Roland von Berlin,* brings us a picture from the fifteenth century. It is an interesting fact that Fichte in his *Reden an die deutsche Nation* had recommended this period as a thankful one for the patriotic novel writer. "To uplift the downcast spirits we should have an inspiring story from this period. It must, however, not be a mere chronicle of deeds and events, but must so seize us in its spell that without our efforts or consciousness we are transferred into the life of that time so that we act, move and live with it. This life must not be depicted with that childish, trifling invention so current in historical novels, but with truth. Deeds and events must be deduced from this life as verifications of its import."[35] The success with which Alexis accomplished this task is self-evident.

The great free cities had served their period of usefulness and had become a disturbing element in the building up of a united realm. So long as the citizen united himself as a unit in the affairs of state, well and good. So soon as he began to consider himself only and his own interests, then his participation for the good of the state must be obtained through force, or he must be excluded from the state. Berlin no longer supported by the other free cities and torn by the revolt of a suppressed populace against a patrician council, falls an easy prey to the prince. Denying it its ancient privileges, which were no longer compatible with centralized government, he attempts to make it unite its powers with him in national progress.

As regards German unity Alexis again repeats much that was noted in the previous novel. A few new points may be mentioned. We see the Prince of Brandenburg seeking first to put his own realm on a firm centralized basis,[36] destroying antiquated institutions,[37] and then through his diplomacy uniting other provinces to his state. "The princes must work together, must form a firm union—one must help the other, for they are the links of the chain that hold together the national weal. They must become stronger and wield a power in this northern land."

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[35] Fichte, *Reden an die deutsche Nation,* Reclam., p. 295.

[36] *Der Roland von Berlin,* III, 19.

[37] *Ibid,* III, 40.

If every prince in the German realm should become as the Kurfürst of Brandenburg would have them, "there would no longer be petty princes. They would become as heads in a large city. There are many limbs in one body, but there is only one head. Many must become limbs who fallaciously imagine themselves heads, that there may be one head."[88]

The Kurfürst does not succeed in his wishes, but there is a hopeful future. "My father did much, I did something, and my successor will do much more. But if we had a thousand arms we could do nothing if the people do not trust us and lend their aid. This Mark can become prosperous and strong, but so long as each closes his own door, and boasts of his own petty rights, where can there be a common purpose? Great things can be attained in the future only when the individual modestly and voluntarily gives himself for the common good."[89]

History has advanced another hundred years in Alexis' next novel, *Die Hosen des Herrn von Bredow,* and its sequel *Der Werwolf.* Here we have a picture from the period just preceding and the first few years of the Reformation. Brandenburg has become a stronger state and holds a higher rank in the German realm. Centralized government, peace and security, however, have not yet been realized. Prince Joachim finds that the nobles must now be reduced that they may re-adjust themselves as a part of the state. They too must not be opposing forces, but must do their part for unity and harmony, though in so doing they do not need to lose the privileges of their rank. Inspired by greed and without unity among themselves, they are easily reduced to submission. Amidst the turmoil there looms up on the distant horizon the growing influence of the great Reformer, and Alexis depicts the people as beginning to think for themselves, and so shows the gradual growth of public opinion.

Besides the references to unity already noted in the other novels, Alexis here accredits Joachim with the plan of a Customs Union, and with some slight estimate of its value as a unifying

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[88] *Ibid,* I, 252.
[89] *Ibid,* III, 183.

element.[40] A Prussian knight informs the Danish ambassador that the Prince has planned to enclose the whole German realm with a great net of custom houses, that internal commerce may have greater freedom and that goods from without may be subject to only one duty. "A sly plan," remarks the Dane, "to become master over all Germany," but the Prussian denies that the king has any such idea.

The sturdy qualities of the Great Elector, the real founder of the Prussian monarchy, are portrayed in *Dorothee,* Alexis' next chronicle of the Mark Brandenburg. Here was an excellent chance to portray the momentous events incident to the rise of Prussia. The Great Elector had succeeded not to a single united state, but to a number of provinces which had no common tie. He sought to bring about a seeming unity in that he established a strong central power which ruled for the common good, and so laid the foundation for a paternal monarchy in the best and only true sense. The intellectual strength of Alexis, however, had begun to weaken and the events of 1848 had broken his spirit. As a result the work is not written with the enthusiasm and patriotic vigor of the other novels.

Whatever the faults of the novel, Alexis has given us a pleasing picture of the first Hohenzollern prince who recognized the great place which Prussia must have in the future of Germany. The message which the author puts into the mouth of the Great Elector was his message to Germany after 1848, with its gloomy reactionary days.[41] The old Burgsdorf asks the Prince if it is incumbent upon Prussia to look to the future of the greater German realm, and this farsighted statesman answers: "It is incumbent upon me, for I am called to do it. This German people and German land must have one German man and one German race about which it can gather in times of danger, that our enemies may not tear off one piece after another from the South or the North, the East or the West of this nation, that it may not be dismembered." Burgsdorf interposes

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[40] *Der Werwolf,* I, 119.
[41] *Dorothee.* III, 155.

that others were called to the task, but the Elector points out why Prussia is called to leadership. "Because the others thought only of themselves, because they had in mind their Spanish, Italian, Hungarian interests only, when they pretended to act for Germany, their mission passed to those who look beyond themselves to a greater German fatherland. Whoever knows his mission and accomplishes it, is in the right." He points out that it is the destiny and mission of the House of Hohenzollern to do this. Whatever ancient rights, whatever antiquated institutions stand in the way should be demolished for the future justified such destruction. And then it sounds almost like an apology on the part of Alexis for his anger toward his king in 1848, when the latter had refused to become the provisional leader of the hereditary empire, when he causes the Great Elector to remind the still obstinate Burgsdorf that "until the people can learn to think, not of themselves, but of the weal of the whole nation, they must allow me to think for them."

In the novel Alexis also depicts the rise of three forces opposing German national unity, the church, the intrigues of Austria and the encroachments of France. The first is represented in Balsamo, who approaches the Princess and opposes the union of the House of Hohenzollern and the House of Orange.[42] "When these two families, who are minded to impress upon the world a new order, become one, when the blood of the Hohenzollern and Orange run in the veins of one ruler, then is our power in danger." The second is represented in the Vienesse Count Lambert, who shows clearly his fear of any centralized power in the North, which may surpass in splendor the old glory of Austria.[43] When Ilgen learns that the Elector has divided his realm between his children and step-children, he complains that all the glorious work of the past has been destroyed.[44] "Thus we are again what we were in the days of George William, a ball in the hands of Austria." The third is shown by the encroachments of Louis XIV. The Great Elector feels he is called

[42] *Ibid,* III, 130.
[43] *Ibid,* I, 121.
[44] *Ibid,* II, 54.

upon to resist.[45] "That must, that shall not be. My German blood rebels against it. I consider my German fatherland destined to something better; to hinder it, is the mission of the House of Hollenzollern." In the days of his mental and physical weakness, he learns that Strassburg has been plundered by the French:[46] "Then his eye gleamed, his hand clenched itself and he cried: 'That is a rupture that cries to God for revenge. Germany must now awaken.'" When he hears of the Chambers of Reunion he writhes as in pain, he laughs aloud and it is a terrible laugh. "Now we will see how the Germans become united. Are they not always united? Everyone lets happen what does not personally concern him."

The first novel of Alexis' series, *Cabanis,* brings Prussian history down to the time of Frederick the Great. The author depicts here the successful campaign of the great Emperor to prevent Prussia being reduced to an inactive role in the future history of Germany. Yet he does not conceal the fact that his success laid the foundation for the dual leadership in Germany which was to last for over a hundred years, and was to be the prime hindrance to German national unity.

Alexis once more emphasizes his firm belief in hereditary monarchy. The Marquis states it very emphatically when he claims:[47] "Crowns may become superannuated, but never the right to wear them." The solution of all the perplexing questions is to come through the work of this ideal hereditary monarch. "This chaotic struggle will cease, the excited and tired times long for rest, and the states desire a man with a firm hand, a clear eye and an earnest will. This only is needed and all else will and must settle itself."

He regrets that Frederick did not bring about a united Germany, when he had the power in his hands.[48] "If Frederick had made himself emperor and king, had put rich Austria in his pocket, and had seized whatever could be seized, he would have

[45] *Ibid,* III, 155.
[46] *Ibid,* III, 51.
[47] *Ibid,* III, 326.
[48] *Ibid,* I, 144.

accomplished something and would have had something in the end. The slight injustice would have brought a rich reward. Questions and investigations would then have been stopped, and the more he took, the greater his right. Those who now bother him would have then been forced to dance to his pipe."

The novel also brings us a patriotic remembrance of the Hasenheide, the place so closely associated with Jahn and his endeavor to bring about a new nation through the education of the physical man, "There the heroes assembled, there was waged the great battle for fatherland and honor."[49] Again he depicts how the boys of Berlin have assembled there and are going to act out the battle of Mollwitz.[50] But none would join Etinne, who represented the cause of Maria Theresa. They pitch a coin to decide, "But those whom the lot sent to my side would not come. Was I to hammer Austrian patriotism into them? Or should the Prussians force them to become Austrians? We were on the point of coming to blows as to who should fight for Austria even before it came to a real fight between Austria and Prussia. Then it occurred to someone that it was perhaps not necessary to fight in order to be happy and have a good time. A youthful politician suggested that King Frederick and Queen Maria Theresa could marry and then all would be well. Everyone was pleased with the thought, but no one knew how it was to be done. But at any rate the desire to fight among ourselves was gone."

The famous words of Count Schulenburg-Kehnert, *Ruhe ist die erste Bürgerpflicht,* form the title of Alexis' portrayal of Prussia during the days of its deepest disgrace. It shows the failure of paternal government to accomplish its task and to hold together a people in times of grave peril. The slight flicker of national feeling that had flamed up under Frederick had given away to a cosmopolitanism that had destroyed almost all feeling for national unity. With thoughts and hearts centered on petty questions, indifferent and without energy, this race of epignons watched the storm draw near and heeded it not.

[49] *Cabanis,* III, 326.
[50] *Ibid,* I, 122.

But the picture is not entirely dark. As Coar has pointed out, Alexis indicates that the time had come when the people and not the rulers represented Brandenburg-Prussian ideals.[51] Democracy in the form of benevolent despotism had served its purpose; democracy in the form of constitutional monarchy and representative government was beginning to take hold on public sentiment and with it came a new notion of national patriotism. A few vigorous patriots are represented as still seeing in Prussia the bulwark of Germany against foreign encroachment and in it the germ of unity that was to develop and unite the states into a common nation.

The honor of arousing this new patriotism is rightfully given to the Romanticists.[52] "This school has brought the peculiar, but downtrodden and forgotten treasures from our nations past to the light of day. What did we know of it before? From them we learned that our people had lived, that our fathers were great and glorious before history was written. Oh, what a fund of legendary lore Romanticism has given us! Now we know what a nation we were under the Hohenstaufen. In the Kyffhäuser sleeps the splendor of the old realm and the ravens croak about the ruins, and the spirit awaits his (Barbarossa's) awakening. That was brought us by Romanticism. Yet you would reject it all because it is but filmy visions while you want reality. What else than a vision did the Jews have of Palestine? But that vision awakened a Moses. Let a Moses be aroused and we shall again have a German nation, a German power. He would arouse the people from their stupor, their indifference, would join every member as a link in the chain and blend people and princes into a harmonious unity."

One obstacle in the way of unity is the desire for self aggrandizement on the part of the several states especially Prussia.[53] "Why do you make it a point of honor to conceal from others what you must confess to yourself. You are conscious of your own weakness, so why not confess it to others? It could only promote

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[51] Coar, *Studies in German Literature*, p. 282.
[52] *Ruhe ist die erste Bürgerpflicht*, II, 62f.
[53] *Ibid*, III, 20.

confidence. But, as it is, when you show yourself in all your pomp before the other Germans you do not desire the brotherly love and friendship which but a few of you have in mind. We are all weak, but if we confess our mutual weakness, we could find the means of becoming strong. That, my dear Prussia, is what separates you from the rest of Germany." Prussia cannot stand alone without Germany. When the state looks not to itself but to Germany then there will be a possibility of unity. "If we do not hold firmly to Germany then there is no Hesse and no Saxony, and no Prussia and no Austria."

Finally Alexis points out how England had become united and how it would have become demoralized if the larger nation had not been the heart from which all veins received their blood.[54] "For centuries our veins have been bound and the blood drawn from them, and attempts made to guide it into other channels, and yet it ever strives to return to the heart. It seeks the way but cannot find it and that is its torment. But it must and will find it again or the name of Germany will be stricken from the page of history." In England the blood of the separate races had but recently found this heart. "The fusion of blood is accomplished and the stamp upon its permanency is interest. Yes, my dear sirs, let us not be mistaken, it is interest that binds and holds us together."

The gloomy picture unrolled in *Keep Cool* had not met with the approval of some of Alexis' contemporaries, and many believed that the next novel would portray the glorious uprising in Germany and the birth of the new realm. But these hopes were deceived. Alexis justifies the gloomy view in *Isigrimm* through historical reasons. "The historical painter does not follow the servitude in Egypt with the crushing of Palestine; his next task is the wandering through the desert."[55] And so the novel portrays the period immediately following the defeat at Jena and the days preceding the events of 1848.

He shows the nation working out its own problems along the line of democratic monarchy. Growth seems to come slowly

[54] *Ibid*, III, 191.
[55] *Isigrimm*, III, 200.

but it is nevertheless present.[56] "The nation seems a people of impracticable dreamers but while they are dreaming and philosophizing, they are preparing in their own way for action. In their universities each professor teaches what he desires, and no statesman troubles himself about it. But before a generation has passed these ideas that were thought to be rank stupidity now rule supreme. These learned men, these hungry poets have thought out in their attic chambers the kings and lawgivers of future days. They have studied what made France free, united, powerful and victorious. They have studied our liberal ideas. The idea rules supreme. Through all Germany this secret conspiracy has its following. Everyone sees that the old system of government has in all its branches lived its day. The people are now thinking. Whoever looks into history dare not dispute it, that thought is a powerful weapon which destroys nationalities, transforms nations and unites dismembered realms. The bearers of this idea move everywhere through the land. They forge no other weapon than that of public opinion."

The novel shows how this same public opinion prepared the way for the successful war of 1813-15, encouraged the downcast hearts in the days of reaction and supported the feeble attempts at representative democratic government during the fourth decade.

During these periods the desire for unity grew more and more, but in the end the attainment of its seemed as remote as before. Alexis speaks his last word concerning it through Mauritz at the grave of Isigrimm, a nobleman who before his death had begun to realize the beneficial tendencies of democracy.[57] "Germany seems more dismembered then ever before, and it is so through those who have tried to bring about its unity. The reason for it all is the selfishness of man which clings tenaciously to possession. Why had God called those great minds into being which created that unity, called the state, when the eternal spirit had preordained that the goal was to be reached as soon as each should do what was right, give what he ought,

[56] *Ibid*, II, 10.
[57] *Ibid*, III, 196.

and sacrifice what he selfishly loved. No one arose concerning whom we can say 'in him is God'; not one among the turbulent people, not one among the embittered princes. They all think of themselves, of their princely houses. In their selfish spirits they think only of their own deeds, of their barns and treasure rooms, and heed not the desires of the masses and the needs of the nation."

That the historical novel of the old type was not adapted to the portrayal of contemporary events was confessed by Alexis in *Isigrimm.*[58] "The laws of the older novel do not fit the historical novel of modern times. When the sunlight of the day, the storms of the night, the burning pain of bleeding wounds, the sorrows and the joys of a people give the painter the colors for his picture, then the laws that created a Tom Jones and a Wilhelm Meister are not sufficient, not even those which a Walter Scott created to portray in elegiac calm the conditions of past races." The difficulty felt by Alexis had been felt years before and the result had been a combination of the historical novel with features from the "Zeitroman," giving the historical "tendenz" novel. In the decades under consideration Heinrich Koenig had produced the best novels of this type.

Koenig had taken an active interest in the political and religious life of the day, but with the true sense of the artist he does not introduce the questions of the day into his novels in such a way that they claim the whole attention. The "tendenz" is subordinate to his purpose and develops out of the material rather than forming the material itself. He usually chooses to portray the immediate past, the conflict of the new with the old, the breaking down of old institutions and the building up of new ones.

With many echoes of Romanticism and Young Germany he wrote *Die hohe Braut* in 1832. The novel depicts the beginning of the French Revolution in Savoy. Here and there however he has a word to say of political unity. He recognizes the difficulties in the way of attaining it. Through Blanca he points out that the

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[58] *Ibid,* III, 200.

individual, the segregated race, can accomplish nothing in the world.[59] Men have an innate tendency to union and not to segregation, and the ideas and conditions of the world are based on this idea. But how much distress and how many struggles men will have to endure before they are so formed, so moulded, so educated to that degree necessary to their mutual happiness, until they can come into harmonious contact with each other, until they have overcome all the hindrances to unity. Koenig does not expect unity from popular government [60] but hopes [61] that the outcome of the mutual efforts of legitimacy and revolution will be a proper prince, a man of might who will through his statesmanship bring about the desired unity.

In his next novel Koenig chose his material from the history of his own country and in this field created his best novel, *Die Klubisten von Mainz* (1847). It deals with the struggle caused by the introduction of the new French ideas into the conservative city of Mainz during the last decade of the eighteenth century.

Political unity receives but scant notice. The conservative Franz Karl hears much said of the German nation, but as he enumerates the many electorial and ecclesiastical princes, the earldoms and manorial estates, he asks himself, "Where is the German nation?"[62] The plot of the novel shows how the petty princes are thwarting the movements for the common good of the nation, prompted by the selfish interest in their own despotic power. As the French encroachment becomes more and more burdensome the patriotic Reading Club passes the resolution that "it is high time that the German states open their eyes, let fall their differences and clasp hands against the common danger."[63] Finally through the Liberal, Förster, he speaks the hopeful message that "Germany in its submissive position has no conception of its greatness or courage. If she would but once rise in her

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[59] *Die hohe Braut*, 184.
[60] *Ibid*, 37.
[61] *Ibid*, 163.
[62] *Klubisten von Mainz*, I, 156.
[63] *Ibid*, II, 166f.

united strength she would tower above all the thrones of Europe."

Following Koenig in the field of the historical "tendenz" novel, but with less success came Edward Duller and Julius Mosen.

The former usually portrays in his works the conflict between church and state, and rarely touches in any real way on the political problems of the day.

These questions receive greater attention in the novels of Mosen. He shows a warm enthusiasm for liberal ideas, though he does not hesitate to lash the petty foibles of that party. This is especially true in *Kongress von Verona* (1842). He describes the victorious struggle of Absolutism against Liberalism at that notable Congress. In regard to national unity he has little to say, except to make sport of the German Corps-Students, who have come to Verona to present a petition from the young men of Germany. What this petition is, we do not learn. When these petitioners learn that even the appeal of Father Görres has been disregarded, they conclude "that neither old or young (?) Germany has anything to gain from the Congress."[64] One of the young men, Achillius, believes that the last hope of German unity has been forever destroyed when he learns that three of his Corps-brothers have been expelled from Halle, Jena und Göttingen. Believing his fatherland is lost, he goes to help the Greeks in their struggle for national independence. The others remain long enough to see their petition disregarded amidst the petty intrigues of party interests and in disgust they depart for home.

The first attempt to write in the style of Goethe a modern "Zeitroman" was made during this period by Karl Immermann in *Die Epigonen* (1836). How closely he followed Goethe has already been pointed out by our literary critics.[65] Through selected types he unrolls before us a picture of the times as he saw them. Unfortunately he had no clear vision of the trend of affairs and has given us only a vague sketch. He seems to

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[64] *Congress von Verona*, 72.

[65] Mielke, 124.

have originally had the desire to write a historical novel after the manner of Scott, but failing to discover any unity of consciousness in the German life of his day, he wrote a pessimistic novel containing distorted pictures of contemporary conditions.

His vigorous opposition to the Student Corps and his hostility towards the vague dreams and wild enthusiasm of the so-called demagogues, brought upon Immermann the condemnation of his contemporaries, made him an outcast in political circles and brought him unjust consideration for many years at the hands of later critics. Only shortly before his death did he come more into contact with the active political life of the day, and was just beginning to arrive at a true valuation of the political trend of affairs. Coar is evidently correct when he believes that if Immermann had lived, part of his message to the Germans would have been that "you cannot unite a people, for its permanent unity is of spontaneous growth."[66]

The hero of *Die Epigonen,* Hermann, the Wilhelm Meister of the novel, has many characteristics in common with Immermann. Like him Hermann undertakes the task of bringing the too enthusiastic students to a sane view of their efforts in behalf of their country, and, as a reward, is branded as a traitor. Like the author, this hero is unable to place himself in the current of events, where he can gain a true perspective of civil life and take an active part in it, or even comprehend it.

The picture he draws of the young students is very unjust. He does not seem able to see back of their actions the worthy patriotic endeavor to bring about a united and free Germany. Instead he depicts them as fanatic and bloodthirsty demagogues, who solemnly pronounce a death sentence upon all princes, mayors and other officials of the realm, and then take to their heels at the sight of a policeman.

Medon, the archdemagogue, is depicted with considerable detail, although we again have a distorted picture. He has just passed through an unfortunate love affair when the great call to arms in the struggle for freedom resounds through Germany.

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[66] Coar, 152.

He entertained the hope of a united fatherland, and this became the god of his heart. His bravery on the battlefield, however, arose from his desire to die. He did not find death, and, after peace was declared, the united fatherland seemed more remote than ever before. Gradually there grew up in him a hatred of all institutions which seemed to hinder in any way the attainment of his desire. In the end he is ready to sanction and lend his hand to deeds of violence.

The ideas of German political unity in the novel are expressed more clearly than anywhere else in the political discussions that take place at the house of Medon.[67] One old statesman of the "Blood and Iron" type advocates force as the proper means of bringing about the necessary unity. He regards this force as the prerogative of the stronger state. When it is pointed out that this old Roman method is not only unjust and impracticable, but also out of harmony with modern political ideals, he urges it still more vigorously. He points out that gentle means would result only in apparent unity, a unity which would be destroyed by the first attack made upon it. "All our states are made up of one race and force could not be unfortunate, as it would only bring about at one stroke what all sincerely desired."

Another statesman opposes this use of force, deeming it very detrimental to those concerned. The society, religion and environments of those concerned were so different that force could only bring about discontent and disruption. The prominent men in the small state would find in the larger state no field for activity and would then become opposing forces. The small states had existed so long, that they could not be blotted out of existence by a mere stroke of the pen. Each state was essentially different from the other and should not be forced to change in any respect. Saladin's word, that it is not necessary that all trees should have the same bark, should apply in a far greater degree to the people than to the individual. The truth of this argument was recognized by many, but it was pointed out that the

[67] *Die Epigonen*, Reclam., 363f.

present condition of affairs was unendurable because the new plan of government demanded a certain inner unity among the different members of the realm.

A third peacefully minded statesman then attempts to suggest a happy mean. He would have a free exchange of institutions, each state taking from the other whatever is good and effective, thus bringing about a continual reform and a growing unity in the whole realm. This suggestion pleased the company, but when they began to consider the details, the difficulties in the way of accomplishing it seemed unsurmountable.

These ideas are in the main those entertained by the several parties of the day. Immermann does not seem to favor either the one or the other, or to offer any additional comment on any of them. In reality Immermann was a product of the previous decade, a spirit unable to adapt himself to the spirit of the new generation.

Heinrich Laube on the other hand was a true representative of his day, filled with the aims and enthused by the plans of the Young Germans. Under his pen the "Zeitroman" took the second step in its development, realism took the place of Romantic idealism.

Between 1834 and 1837 he issued his novel cycle, *Das Junge Europa.* The three novels of which it is composed show considerable difference in style. In *Die Poeten,* we have a combination of Goethe's manner with Young German ideals; in *Die Krieger,* a combination of Goethe, Wienbarg and Scott; in *Die Bürger,* a return to the style of the first, but Young German ideals are tempered by a spirit of resignation.

Although political affairs are introduced to a considerable extent into the novels, little is said of German unity in particular. The circle of poets in the novel of that name have all been Turners and are firm believers in the principles advocated by their patron, Jahn. We are told that they spoke among themselves much of unity, but we learn nothing more of their views than that sarcastic remark that "Germany had once been intoxicated with new wine, had had her heart in her mouth, her senses in her pocket and had made a fool of herself. She had

sought a long lost love and a beautiful lover, had made a mistake and embraced her own shadow."[68]

The liberal views of the author find expression in the letters between William and Valerius.[69] William for the sake of argument is made to oppose the Democracy of the day. He believes its ultimate success would be unfortunate. The suppression of the individual could only lead to the elevation of the masses and that would be fatal to the progress of culture. Valerius, on the other hand, hates the egotism of the state in its preferment of the individual. It can only lead to a lifeless monarchy, whereas the other can lead to the education of man until he can rule himself. The ultimate aim of the latter is a million of self-rulers. He condemns those who have only their selfish aims in view and lose sight of the pernicious effect of their selfish actions.

Constantin, a Republican, represents the radical views of that party. He hopes to see the day when all nationalities will disappear and in their place a universal republic arise.

The second and third volumes of the novel, *Die Krieger* and *Die Bürger,* did not appear until after the Bundestag had issued its decree against Laube and the other Young German writers. The first was written in part while the author was in prison and both mark a decided change in his views. The ideas expressed and the demands made are tempered and the author begins to take a broader view of the times. Valerius goes to Poland to lend it his help in the struggle for freedom from Russia. One after another of his fondest hopes is destroyed. After Warsaw had been betrayed to the Russians by a demagogue who through his intrigues had destroyed the unified action of the parties, Valerius flees, convinced that no people can obtain their political freedom and national independence except through their own efforts. Even this cannot be successful until the leveling of social distinctions has brought about a certain inner unity and strength.

The novels of Ferdinand Stolle are broadly considered historical novels of the older type. Most of them, however, have

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[68] *Die Poeten,* 43.
[69] *Ibid,* 15.

Napoleon as the central figure and might with greater truth be considered as novels of the memoir type.

During the years of suppression there had grown up among the Romanticists an intense hatred of Napoleon. The gloomy days that followed brought a natural reaction, especially when the Liberals began to formulate their desires concerning civic and political problems. Their thoughts turned naturally toward those nations which stood for parliamentary government, and those men who stood for liberal ideas became the object of their regard and admiration. The first among these was France and even Napoleon. This admiration was nothing new, although it came now more and more to the front. It can be traced in the works and thoughts of Wielend, Knebel, Goethe, Byron, Hegel, Gaudy, Heine, Varnhagen von Ense and others. Hauff had been influenced by it in *Das Bild des Kaisers,* though his admiration was not such that he ceased to be patriotic towards his own country. His admiration for Napoleon in his story was impelled more by literary motives than personal feeling. This Napoleon genie craze found its chief exponent in Stolle. He is an enthusiastic admirer of Napoleon and has made him and his work the subject matter of more than half of his novels.

He is not at all consistent in his political views of German affairs, and in fact seems to consider them only of secondary importance. In *1813* (1838), in common with many Saxons of the day and the radical Liberalists of the realm at large, he seems to advocate relief for Germany through foreign aid. Ruffus, the Saxon, boasts that "when the German provinces unite to drive out Napoleon, then the world will see that the United Germany will not need any foreign country to prescribe its laws."[70] Jerome, however, answers that "when Napoleon conquers Prussia a second time the boundaries of France will reach as far as Poland. Then the universal monarchy is completed and Napoleon will be rather the man to proclaim the unity of Germany than the theories of German demagogues."

Later this same Ruffus makes sport of the theorizing Ger-

[70] Stolle, *1813,* III, 59.

mans.[71] "The philosophic Germans are divided into thirty-nine separate states. This in no wise suits the so-called Liberals who assisted in the war with Napoleon. Some speak of German unity, others of Kaiser und Reich, others still of a Republic and I know not what else. Each schoolmaster demands a new form of government for the Holy Roman Empire. In theory the Germans have accomplished something." Through the voice of Talleyrand, the enemy of Germany, Stolle has again voiced much the same sentiment.[72] "The good Germans have been studying. Indeed, they have adopted our phraseology and accomplished great things with it. Their 'Tugenbund' understands now how to start a conspiracy as well as the best of us. The words fatherland, freedom, unity, brotherhood, tyranny, national uprising, war of extermination, have increased a hundred fold. In short, my dear Duke, in your next campaign you will not only have to deal with the cabinets of Russia, Prussia and Austria, not only with the soldiers of the imperial army or the army of Jena, but with German Jacobines."

In *Elbe und Waterloo* (1838) Stolle recognizes that the efforts of the enemies of Germany have been successful in preventing national unity. He praises this political foresight and seems to think it is a good joke on the Germans. A public reader in Paris tells the assembled crowd how in the Congress at Vienna Talleyrand had protested against the granting of Poland and Saxony to Russia and Prussia respectively as compensation for the war.[73] A French dandy at once sees through it all! "It has always been the policy of the French cabinet to prevent Russia from becoming too powerful. As regards Germany, the cabinet aims at the same policy that the larger states may not absorb the lesser and so gradually a united Germany arise to the great disadvantage of France. France has only gain from a dismembered Germany."

Stolle even believes in the suppression of the free press. In *Die Granite Colonne von Maréngo* (1855), he believes it is dan-

[71] *Ibid*, III, 267.
[72] *Ibid*, I, 120.
[73] *Elbe und Waterloo*, III, 101.

gerous to the public weal.[74] "At a time when the foe stands before our gates unity of the nation is the prime requisite. Party struggles can only be injurious to this aim, and the press should be suppressed that the already strong party feeling may not be fanned into flames."

As has been pointed out by Mielke, the fourth decade was marked by the introduction of another type of foreign influence, that of Dickens, Duma, Hugo and Sue. Written primarily with the intent of entertaining, the German novels of this type had the socialistic color of their models, and were to a certain extent "Zeitromane" in content.

A representative type of this may be seen in *Paul,* written by Ungern-Sternberg in 1845. Its object was to awaken the nobility to the old honors of their rank. They are again to lead in public life, in part for the good of the German nation at large, but chiefly for their own selfish interests. With such a purpose in view, it is not surprising that he had no sympathy with the prevailing Liberal views of freedom and unity. It would necessarily rob the nobility of many of their ancient rights and so could not receive the support of that class.

The hero, Paul, cautions his friend Lindfried against the party which strives for unity through constitutional forms of government and are deceiving peasant and citizen with their deceptive snares.[75] "How glorious and exalted the dream of Germany united, Germany free, the people a power in the state. To the present time, however, this cup which was to be filled with sparkling wine has only been filled with the nauseous dregs of dirty political party interests. It is but a poison and the most highhanded despotism would here find a worthy task in clearing the soil that the great creative spirits, which are to come and sow their golden grain, may find a suitable soil. Wherever tried these forms have proven inefficient and have not succeeded in filling the people with a new political consciousness." Even if the constitution should be accepted by a majority of the states, he still

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[74] *Die Granite Colonne von Maréngo,* I, 134.

[75] *Paul,* III, 168f.

doubts whether it would be a benefit to Germany. The nation, he believes, owes the depth and thoroughness of its intellectual life to its political disunion and to the absence of a law giving states capital. The real evils that exist can be easily removed by the power vested in a monarchy. Then the author loses himself in a long discussion of hereditary monarchy, and the good it has accomplished in the past. At the end of it all he again insists that unity can only lead to a serious interference with the intellectual life of the nation as a whole.

An interesting example of political material incorporated in the popular entertainment literature may be found in Zschokke's *Die Gründung von Maryland* (1851). Into this story from the early part of the seventeenth century are interwoven political questions of the nineteenth in a way absolutely contrary to historical truth, yet with such skill that it does not seem a glaring incongruity.

He points out that America is becoming the refuge for political exiles. Through the errors of the statesmen, Europe is being robbed of her best men and plunged into party strife. Persecutions in state and church had been instituted to enforce silence upon the people, but it had only served to increase the agitation and discontent. The nation demanded lawful order. Only this lawful order would be able to bring true freedom, prevent anarchy among the people, and despotism on the part of the rulers. But lawful order could not be instituted so long as the courts gave commands instead of laws, and the arbitrary will of one person dominated the will of each state.

The remedy according to Zschokke is to draw together around the throne of the king, instruct him in the true state of affairs, and then put an end to the inane party strife. The individual must yield for the good of the whole. In a state that is well ordered no part of the people should be allowed to maintain a separate state. Pointing out that this is the one requisite for Germany he concluded, "We wish to be and must be one people, under similar laws with common interests and with one king."[76]

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[76] *Die Gründung von Maryland*, p. 152.

The beginning and close of the next period are characterized by two widely divergent extremes; the gloomy days of reaction following the Revolution of 1848, and the happy days of 1870-71, when the dream of the century was realized in a united fatherland.

The Revolution was the first attempt on the part of the Germans to regain that unity which had been lost since the middle ages. The attempt failed from various causes, but chiefly because of the hesitancy of any leading power to favor and to really direct the movement. The popular leaders too had no well-defined plan, and were largely inspired to action by the spirit of the February Revolution in Paris.

The hopes and aspirations of the people had been centered in the German Parliament, but the enthusiasm of the masses was not able to triumph over the jealous interests of the princes and their deep-rooted inclination to disunion, and the whole movement took an inglorious end in the Rump Parliament. In 1851 the old Diet was re-established and the state of affairs before 1848 returned. But the struggles of these years had not been altogether without result. As a rule great national movements do not succeed at one blow, and only through repeated defeat is victory won. The debates of the Frankfurt Parliament and the gloomy days that followed its dissolution had cleared away much of the theoretical mist with which the idea of political unity had become surrounded during the previous decades. A distinct program was at last outlined by the Liberal party—the establishment of a Confederation composed of all the German states, with the exclusion of Austria, under the leadership of Prussia.

The smouldering strife between Austria and Prussia needed but a breath to break into flame. This came from the Schleswig-Holstein controversy. Bismarck had no faith in moral conquest and saw that national unity could be realized only through blood and iron. In the war of 1866 the sword cut asunder the dualistic knot and decided that Germany should be guided by Prussia. Unity was however not yet complete when the war with France broke out. But all Germany arose *en mass* to repel

the old enemy. Enthusiasm for the gigantic deeds of German arms brought home to the nation as a whole the meaning of political unity and all hearts were lifted above the narrow limits of petty states into the heights of a united political state. The moment had come, the whole nation, north and south, wanted unity and no German government, no German statesman was able or minded to prevent it. Bavaria took the initiative, Würtemberg, Saxony, Hesse and the rest followed, and by a united vote the crown was offered to the king of Prussia and accepted by him January 18, 1871. The dream of centuries, the longing and efforts of the numerous generations of patriots was thus crowned with fulfillment. Germany had again gained its political unity, its prestige and its liberty.

The period then was one of struggle and transformation. The old ideas and institutions of the past had proven their uselessness and the people began to build their hopes on a sane development and growth of the nation at large in all phases of social and civic life. The problems of this development, transformation and growth were those that found treatment in the novel.

The historical novels of this period were as a whole far inferior to those of the preceding and following periods. This was in large measure due to the new attitude towards history. History was no longer merely a consideration of men and events, but to these was added as a background, and at times even as a foreground, the civic, social and intellectual life of the times portrayed. This brought a vast amount of new and interesting material for the use of the novel writer, but it in turn too often received the chief emphasis and the historical novel ceased to be a piece of poetic art. Such was the case in the novels of Mühlbach, Godsehe, Riehl, and even Laube, and only the exceptional writers, such as Scheffel, or Freytag, were able to keep the historical element within the proper bounds. Contemporary history did not adapt itself to this type of novel, as it was too new to grant the required perspective. Hence it was that in these novels existing political ideas in general and national unity in particular received but scant treatment.

Although his novels contain no direct treatment of political unity, Freytag's great *Ahnen* cycle deserves brief mention here. This "national epic in novel form" marks the highest growth of that type of patriotic novel which had found its best treatment in Alexis' Brandenburg series. Alexis, however, was writing for a Germany that was not yet united, while Freytag wrote amidst the stirring events of 1870-71. Just for this reason the novels of Alexis are more valuable documents in the literary treatment of German unity. The problem could no longer interest in any marked degree the imagination of a Freytag. His portrayal of the historical unity of the race, the intellectual and social development of his people from heathen days to the stormy days of 1848 was however one that could be appreciated far better by the entire new realm than the equally patriotic efforts of Alexis, who was writing for a discouraged people and a nation without unity. Alexis was not granted the privilege of depicting the joys of 1870-71, and one cannot but regret, in spite of the artistic weakness of the later volumes, that Freytag did not give his cycle a worthy conclusion in a final volume dealing with the events of 1866 and 1870-71.

All the more frequently did these political elements receive treatment in the "Zeitroman," which reached its highest growth during this period. The problems and conflicts in state, church, and society offered abundant material for use. Its very complexity defied solution, and just for that reason enticed many to attempt it. The social and civic ideals of the previous decades had proven inadequate and disasterous. The causes of this failure were sought out and depicted and the new task was to set up new ideals in the light of past errors. The new literature was essentially optimistic and sought to emphasize the best that was present in the life of the time and to draw from it hopeful conclusions for the future.

One of the foremost figures in the literary activity of the previous period had been Karl Gutzkow. In and around him were centered the ideals and endeavors of the Young Germans. In journalistic work, in the drama and the novel, he had been the banner carrier of this second Storm and Stress. During the

fourth decade he had devoted himself to winning fame in the drama. After the revolution he again returned to the novel and offered his most pretentious works, *Die Ritter vom Geiste* and *Der Zauberer von Rom.*

In his journalistic activity Gutzkow had made the claim that literature must educate the Germans to unity of political consciousness and to the attainment and possession of political freedom. He saw the realization of a united nation only in the form of a federal state. By treaties and agreements, by force if need be, he would free the states from provincialism and define to them the objects for which they should strive. He advised the building up of a parliamentary government in each state until the time should come when they could consolidate into a German parliament. He sought to remove everything that threatened to hinder the growth of the realm into freedom and unity, the dynastic jealousy, the indifference of the masses, petty political scheming and the false hopes of the Liberalists of unity through foreign aid. Side by side with the reforms in political life should go the reforms in church and society and economic conditions.

He believed that progress could only come through culture and that the spirit of progress should decide all perplexing questions. When the ideals of the previous decades suffered shipwreck in the revolution, Gutzkow still believed that his favorite ideal contained the germ of success in it. To give it definite expression he wrote his "nebeneinander" novel, *Die Ritter vom Geiste* (1850-51). Individual effort, party activity, even revolution had failed to achieve any permanent result, so the task was to be given to the Ritter vom Geiste, those spirits, who, tempered by past failure, should join in themselves the scattered parties and should work with unselfish spirit for progress in all lines of activity, for freedom, for self-culture. The ability to yield one's self to the ideal of national and individual progress alone was the necessary qualification for membership in this band. Gutzkow has not, and was not able, to show in any definite way how these knights are to attain their purpose, but he does give a satisfying picture of their general mood, their desires and in-

tents without limiting their striving through concrete purposes. But Gutzkow's purpose of promulgating the idea, of comforting his contemporaries with the thought that all was not yet lost, that the ideal was still in true hands and would be effective in the future, was realized.

Nowhere in the novel does he mention German unity. However as the central idea of the novel evidently came from Arndt, who in 1817 conceived the achievement of national unity as possible through the united efforts of a band of likeminded men, it is reasonable to suppose that somehow Gutzkow expected these knights to solve, among other problems, the perplexing one of German unity.

As has already been noted, the old question of the relation of church and state had been revived with new power during the early decades of the century. The student corps and other freedom loving organizations had denied the rights of the Pope in the direction of state affairs, or of the state in the direction of church affairs. Young Germany continued the protest and demand. They praised the Reformation as being a step in advance in the freeing of thought, but regretted the fact that it had not completed the task. The schism in church matters had through the resultant war been once for all made permanent, and this schism was one of the chief hindrances to political unity and civic freedom. The Young Germans had vigorously opposed the growing encroachments of the church, which here and there was winning its old power over the petty states and was striving to suppress the growing popular opinion in political affairs.

This encroachment ran counter to Gutzkow's idea of free development, and in *Der Zauberer von Rom* (1858-61) he embodied his objections and issued a warning note. In the introduction he states the cause of his anxiety and defines the purpose of his novel. "The strife of the Welfs and Gibilines is not yet ended. Unity is not yet attained. We have the Liga, have the Union, but who can confidently assure us that the fatherland will not see a second battle at Mühlbach, the most dangerous hour of our history. The sorry inheritance of old, the division between North and South, may perhaps be the breach through

which our sanctuaries, language, culture and public weal can be taken by storm, and sooner or later it will be decided whether the world belongs to the Slavs, the Kelto-Romans or the Germans. The following work will endeavor so far as the impotent word is effective to work for German unity. It is intended to warn, to cheer, to show the dangers of the fowler's pipe, and would give the Christian people more worthy goals than the *Fata Morgana* of the Romish world has yet shown. It intends to stir up the German courage for the coming struggle, help nourish century old pride, and intends to follow the traitors of our own camp into their secret paths of darkness."

The author had expected that the book would arouse a furor in Germany, but he confesses in the preface to the second edition that it had been received with tolerant silence. "In this silence and the many letters which the author has received, the fact is made clear that the message of the book—a clarified Catholicism free from Rome—correspond to a feeling shared by a majority of the Catholics in Germany, and it requires only the help of our political institutions, especially of our Catholic princes to bring about the unity of the fatherland through separation from Rome."

Gutzkow was, however, unable to carry out completely this program. We get a more or less distinct picture of the intrigues, plans and objects of the church, but no definite suggestion as to how separation from Rome is to be brought about and how the desired religious unity is to be instituted when the separation has been accomplished.

Treating the same theme as *Die Ritter vom Geiste,* but lacking the artistic energy of his model, Gustav Kühne wrote *Die Freimaurer* (1855). He too would bring about political unity through the uniting power of some one universal thought.

He deplores the fact that the initial step towards unity had not been made years before.[77] "For a golden age we need first a German Augustus. From whence such a one is to come after the Prussian Frederick but half understood his task, is, under

[77] *Die Freimaurer,* 91.

the present condition of affairs, hard to say. He struck to pieces the sorry remnants of the Roman-German realm, but it never occurred to him to lay the foundation of a new structure."

The difficulties to be overcome and the remedy are very clear in his mind.[78] "I hear much said of the difference between Upper and Lower Germany, but it seems to me we have those contrasts everywhere. A journey of a few miles is sufficient to show that. The whole nature of this people and this land seem to warrant these manifold contrasts. If only some powerful thought or idea held these diverging Germans together. But in this inclination towards disunions all powers are exhausted. With rare stubborness each insists all the more zealously on his own opinion, the less distinct the differences may seem. I do not know how this thousandfold dismembered Germany shall be able to conceive a common ideal and so come into their own rights. Each stands isolated and alone, watching, however, with jealous eye every move of the other. This hundredfold independence no longer bound or united by any great ideal, they call freedom. It seems disunion rests like a curse on this people. They bow before inherited tyranny and on the quiet found secret clubs where altars are erected to freedom. But truth should not remain quietly in the hidden nooks, but out in life. A lodge of free men must surely have power to make propaganda and so lead the nation to seek in itself the new salvation."

Like Gutzkow, Kühne gives us the ideal picture and does not weigh it down with practical plans and results.

Among the Young German "Epigonen" must also be reckoned Max Waldau (Georg Spiller von Hauenschild). In some of his lyric productions he shows himself an ardent patriot, who sings of German unity. In the post-revolutionary poem "Oh These Days" he bemoans the disrupted condition of his country, the unfortunate party strife and the gloomy reaction.

> "A corporal home, we ask for the German soul,
> A Germany, one only, not thirty lands,
> Free German soil for a free German flock,
> One single unit only, not scattered bands."

[78] *Ibid*, 596f.

Much of this same spirit finds expression in his novels. In political affairs he would humanize the aristocracy through the spirit, and democracy, through form, and like Gutzkow he believes in the unifying power of an all powerful idea. His ideas regarding unity are expressed to some extent in *Aus der Junkerwelt* (1850), but more definitely in the far more artistically written *Nach der Natur* (1851). But even here we have the ideas expressed in subjective reflections rather than in objective activity.

Through the artist, Stein, Waldau justifies the introduction of "tendenz" into the literature of the day and into his own novels.[79] He regards its introduction as necessary. Pamphlets and programs had failed to reach the people, but a book that looked like a novel came into the hands of thousands. The ideas of the day incorporated in flesh and blood, depicted as eating and drinking like other men gradually win their way and find a public. "The times demand 'tendenz,' the whole trend of affairs demands it; it is a child of the times and so justified."

This same Stein is made the spokesman of Waldau's political message. To him the highest ideal in civic life is to be a man.[80] "I came into the world as a man. I know of no other intellectual or material classification. Even the thought that I am a German neither depresses nor fills me with pride. Brightly painted boundary posts, mother tongue and race peculiarities are trifles which bother me but little, as according to my convictions they but hamper and postpone the task of the human race. This task is, stripping off the perverse trumpery and becoming united and strong in West and East, in North and South, to be men and to enjoy and suffer whatever our lot may be."

The failure of the Revolution he thought was due to the lack of a centralized purpose.[81] "That the Revolution was necessary was recognized by all. It was fought however without knowing the name of the desired right; one expected to find

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[79] *Nach der Natur*, I, 88.
[80] *Ibid*, I, 79.
[81] *Ibid*, III, 91.

a name as soon as it was born. It came, but the antiquated Liberalism palmed off on us a monster instead of a newborn political Germany; instead of fresh, vigorous ideas, old student-corps dreams, which on account of their antiquated character could not stand the test. The child had now a name, but it was not the Messiah. They called together parliaments and parleyed with the dynasties without any gain for the people. And yet it was after all only a question of the people. Every considerate regard for princely families is and remains foolishness. To favor one person before a world of millions is a monstrosity."

So long as this cringing to despotic princes exists there can be no hope of relief.[82] Wiegsdorf, a Republican, voices this opinion to Stein. "Do not paint for Germany, a people of princes but whose inhabitants are not even a people. Woe to the poet of France or England who would dare to scorn the land that gave him birth, and woe to the poet of Germany who does not have a curse for that hussy, Germania, who squanders the property of her children for trifles. For Germany there is no delivery so long as there are states, so long as the poor orphan children are not carried off and sold before the eyes of the mother. Then, perhaps, she will awaken, but only then. (Not even then as the fate of Schleswig-Holstein shows.)[83] Let us be men. The fate that will not let us be Germans helps us on a step. Or do you not believe me? Have you confidence in that miserable juice that suddenly colors the ribbons black-red-gold? How will you found a nation when the Frankfurt babblers cringe? How will you found a federal state when permission must be humbly asked from the government and their representatives. German unity on such a basis is perfidious, rotten nonsense, a miserable lie, which at most could find support only in the press of a land to which supremacy is to be presented as a Christmas gift. But I told you that some time ago. If you do not agree with me, then look upon the forsaken betrothed of Friedrich Halden. You believe she is dying of love or some other beautiful cause. I tell

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[82] *Ibid*, I, 35.

[83] *Ibid;* note to second edition.

you this girl is a true example of the vileness which rules to-day in Germany; she dies of an unfulfilled desire for a—coronet. Let her die without any ado about it; it is good that she has not borne, that she does not leave behind her any heirs to her opinions. Are these the mothers of the future"?

A Republic could, according to Waldau, succeed in establishing unity, but in other matters it would be dangerous.[84] Stein is asked, "And so you seek the solution of every problem in a Republic"? "Yes, for certain purposes; for example, for a united Germany; not otherwise. For any other purpose a Republic is dangerous, for it comes too close to the natural condition, to existence, side by side (nebeneinander), than that the slightest additional step—the abolishment of the individual states—might seem necessary; and yet it must some time be made in order to remove the last barrier between all creatures and their just rights."

He does not believe in segregation, at any rate he does not believe that it can be instituted.[85] "Suppose the people had gained their freedom from their prison masters and began to treat with each other directly. In their attempts to crystallize among themselves and to reject all foreign elements, they would soon find conflicting interests. Resistance would invite force and destruction. Among the conflicting interests some of them would necessarily have to be sacrificed. When this had been done and progress made towards the contemplated segregation, it will be noticed that the most important step had already been taken, that the desired segregation had brought about the strongest unity. Individual ownership (Einzelbesitz) separates men and forms states, while the living together (Zusammenleben) of all humanity, in lieu of a better word, can only form a universal confederate state. To me the universal leveling seems only possible through the national struggles of our day, and in the way already mentioned. I found the way to unity first when I saw the whole world striving for separation."

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[84] *Ibid,* III, 91.
[85] *Ibid,* III, 95.

He has a definite idea of the offices of a worthy leader.[86] "We need a guiding hand, but the people must remain the head. The hand must be allowed to execute only what the head dictates. The name of this hand, whether it be King or President, seems to be of little importance, but it must at once be cut off, if it does not prove equal to the task assigned it."

Finally he recognizes this hand in Prussia.[87] "We are in Silesia, so then on Prussian soil, the land to which the history of the world does not grow weary of dancing attendance; and it will not cease to do so as long as states exist in Germany, for all the other states can offer absolutely no anchor for the future. I shall not speak of the good qualities of Prussia. I speak only of the inefficiency of the other states and conclude without sympathy, but not without antipathy, that so long as one existing state must be the axis of future events in Germany, the eye of Germany will rest on Prussia."

The three chief novels of Meiszner-Hedrich, *Die Sansara* (1858), *Schwarzgelb* (1862-4), and *Babel* (1867), differ considerably in subject matter, but follow in the main the old type of "Zeitroman." The first was a "salon-novel" with reminiscences of Byron, the last two political "Zeitromane" of the usual type.

In *Sansara* the author seems to favor states union. He has no sympathy with all the ranting about the petty states.[88] "The Germans are continually being told that they are not a nation because they are divided into states. No matter how thoroughly false, no matter how humorous the claim, it is accepted without consideration and proclaimed broadcast. Perhaps this life in small states is after all a higher type of civic life. That the United States of America are united states and not a united state, that Switzerland consists of cantons, seems to cause no complaint, but the rant about the German petty states is universal."

Meiszner believes that Germany owes infinitely much to its minor states, and that civic life in these states is vastly superior

[86] *Ibid*, I, 81.
[87] *Ibid*, II, 7.
[88] *Sansara*, IV, 39.

to that in the larger states. "It may cost more, but consider the advantage. If we inquire whence it is that education and culture are so highly developed in Germany as nowhere else, do we not find that it is because all do not strive towards one center, while the outer segments of the circle grow torpid? The individual petty state grants its inhabitants greater freedom. Superior forms of government can best be realized within limited territory. How could a prince presume to become a tyrant? He is forced to deal humanely with his people, for no circle of bayonets separate him from them. Just as little as a school is better when increased by a hundred pupils, just so little is a state of half a million ruled better when two millions are added. To be sure these states are denied the right of a voice in the questions of the balance of power, but how dearly this honor has to be bought. The lives led by these states can only be an enviable one until the universal bond is found which can unite them."

We are not told what this universal bond is but Meiszner seems to favor a states union under the leadership of one of the great powers.

There are but few references to unity in *Schwarzgelb* and in *Babel*. The scene of these is laid in Austria, the first during the reaction following 1848, the second during the socalled rejuvination of Austria in 1859. For our purpose the latter may serve as an example. The conflicting views of the day are likened to the tower of Babel. Whoever adds new theories is invited to help build the tower.[89] "That matters cannot remain as they are, that domestic and national affairs should be discussed and managed in a parliament all are agreed. When it came however to settling the first necessary questions, the old strife was renewed. One party was in favor of building the tower as one complete circular structure, another would have two towers, a third five or six. If the single towers were made similar in style, complaint was made of leveling, the builders began to quarrel and soon separated as sworn enemies. In short all is Babel, that, is, confusion."

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[89] *Babel*, III, 185.

The remedy Meiszner sees in a dignified parliamentary body which could put an end to the weak and useless party strife, have power to act effectively and so bring some unity into such diverse forces. Such a body would be able to bring about an understanding between those who wished a separation of Austria from Germany and those who wished the unity of the two.

The Revolution of 1848 marked the bankruptcy of the idealistic dreams of the previous decades, and realism began to be the watch word. The "Zeitroman" of the older type, represented by Gutzkow, was regarded as essentially idealistic, though it drew its material from the real world. In its place there grew up a new type of novel which was to show the German people not amidst their idealistic dreaming but at work. The ideals of the Knights of the Holy Ghost must give way to the incontestable facts of the scientist, the historian, the sociologist, and the practical statesman. This type of novel did not preach ideals, but social reform, civic progress and national development. The state was no longer an idea but a reality dependent for its founding only upon the proper adjustment of the social body. The individual was but one in the rank and file. And when he recognized this and in his proper place worked for freedom and social growth, it was believed the day would then come when the nation would be free and united. Freytag's success in *Soll und Haben* opened the way; Spielhagen and Auerbach followed and the new type ruled supreme until it in turn gave way to Naturalism.

Whatever may be the present day estimate of Spielhagen's literary activity, the vast importance of his influence on German life and politics during the sixth and seventh decades must be recognized at its highest worth. In the gloomy days of reaction he drew for the German people a bright picture of the future. Like Dr. Berger in *Problematische Naturen,* he preaches the hopeful message: "Through darkness to light, through struggle to victory." Idle dreaming was not enough, but each must do his part. "I am convinced that we cannot reach our goal through pious wishes but that through worldly means we must accomplish our desired ends." Spielhagen belongs to no party

and yet like Alexis he fought for the rights of liberal citizenship and took sides against all that in any way checked or destroyed the development of Germany to unity and freedom.

National unity was to him an ideal which the German people could appreciate without the help of the poet's imagination. The trend of affairs in his day pointed only too surely to a unity through a confederation of the German states, dependent for its accomplishment on the proper development of the civic body. Although the contents of his novels deal with the problems of society at large, he depicts some of his characters as striving for national unity. He and his readers may not agree with the plans of these heroes but the laudable goal of their desires and the sincerity of their endeavors is depicted with a sympathy and truthfulness that was not lost on the Germans of that day and is not without appreciative readers even in our later day. Such characters can be found to some extent in *Problematische Naturen* (1861), *In Reih und Glied* (1866), *Hammer und Ambosz* (1869) but they are depicted with greater detail in *Die von Hohenstein* (1863) and this novel may here serve as a type of Spielhagen's treatment.

The novel has as a background the days of 48. Münzer, Holm, Schmitz and Degenfeld are the chief revolutionists who are striving for freedom and unity. The monarchists are represented chiefly by the two brothers, the President and Colonel von Hohenstein. They too hope for ultimate unity but expect it along conservative lines and are bitterly opposed to revolutionary methods.

The position of the first group towards the questions of the day is outlined in an imaginary speech which Münzer makes to the assembled students.[90] "It is no mere play, it is no mere empty honor for which you are striving. Let those, who are wiser than you, decide what is right and what is necessary. But that their decrees may receive acceptance, that the voice of the Senate may not echo unheard, we need youthful and vigorous patriots who have the courage to act, aye to fight when peaceful means

[90] *Die von Hohenstein*, 44.

no longer suffice. Or perhaps you believe the golden seeds of freedom will be like the wheat which fell upon good ground and brought forth fruit some a hundred fold, some a thousand fold? Do you believe that the dumb philistine souls will ever conceive what freedom is? That the arrogant aristocratic heart will ever beat for equality? That pope and priest after imprisoning and excommunicating the heretic for centuries will easily become enthusiastic about brotherly fraternity. No and again no! Might still passes for right and so right must be might. That is the deep import of our cause which seems to our opponents so childish. With human rights in one hand, and the sword in the other, thus and not otherwise will freedom make its way through this nation."

The position of the other group is just as clearly defined in a conversation between the brothers von Hohenstein.[91] The Colonel would quell the political agitation by force. "I wish that for one month I had unlimited power, and from here to the Russian boundary there would be left only isolated examples of this brood and these would creep into a hole so soon as they caught the gleam of a bayonet. But instead of this one begins to parley with them and to call together assemblies to council about unity of government policy."

The President would let them spend their energy in useless efforts. "A parliamentary government is nonsense. Mob remains mob and nothing can be done for them in spite of the wild theories of our socialists and communistic philanthropists. When the people have shouted themselves hoarse and worn themselves out, they will be able to see for themselves, though I do not mean to say that it would not be well to occasionally help this sane view by some physical arguments *ad hominem*."

"What is occasionally?" cried the Colonel, "It seems to me every moment is the suitable one for striking a blow for one's king. Just have a conference with them regarding constitutions and you will see what concessions you have to make in spite of all your wisdom."

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[91] *Ibid*, 129f.

"Perhaps the matter is not so bad, dear brother, when two parties want to agree, if no deciding judge is present, the stronger party is usually victorious. An assembly—à la bonne heure—could, even though but transitory, be a cause of disturbance. But our good Germans will never come to that. Assemblies that are called together to arrive at a harmonious agreement have from the very first the germ of death in them. And the assembly in the Main city? This dream of German unity will soon be dreamed out. The Germans are good monarchists in spite of divers Republicans who would prove the contrary. They will not lay violent hands on their princess, and until the Hohenzollern have come to an agreement with the Habsburgers, the Welfs with the Wittelbachers and the others concerning a system of government—until then everything will remain as it is."

The mutual relations of these two groups is defined in a conversation between Münzer and President von Hohenstein. In speaking of their mutual points of contact the President points out that in many ways their aims are the same but that they differ on the method of attainment.[92] "You wish for the welfare of our fatherland. You wish a united, strong, and free Germany. I desire the one as well as the other. You however want it made possible to-day. I, because I believe that in this violent way the goal can never be attained, desire that we make no third or fourth step without first having considered well the first and second."

"No, Mr. President. Two thousand years ago they called it foolishness to put new wine into old casks. That however is the efforts of the best of your party who are striving as you say for a free, united and powerful Germany. But the others? They want nothing more than to preserve the old delusion, the old night in which man has so long wandered without light. They desire only to keep their old privileges which make the equality and brotherhood of man a delusion and a mockery."

The President then points out, and Münzer must agree with him in part that he cannot replace the old wheels in the government machine with new ones. "What follows? That you must

[92] *Ibid*, 301.

reckon with the old factors which you cannot replace with new ones. That you from lack of fresh water, will have to wash the state for a time in the impure water. But what hinders you from gradually introducing fresh water into the old? To drop the metaphor, what hinders you from using the institutions and means which now exist to your purpose?"

Later in a conversation with Wolfgang, Münzer doubts the success of such a system.[93] "Gradual reform can do nothing. These aristocratic statesmen will soon run through their arts and then next will come the appeal to the *ultima ratio* of the king which is also the *ultima ratio* of the people. Then iron will heal what medicine was not able to heal and many a funeral pyre will have to be lighted before the oppressive atmosphere of this police-state is so purified that a free breast will be able to breathe freely."

The military policy of Bismarck had not escaped the watchful eye of Spielhagen, and here for the first time in the novel of the century the part which the army is to play in the coming struggle is noted.[94] The Major von Degenfeld is represented as recognizing its value. "The restless progress of modern times will make itself felt in the military life. The German army cannot remain what it is. We have the one alternative; either we become pretorians or we transform the armies of the princes into a national army. I am not pessimistic enough to consider the first as probable, at any rate for any length of time, but I am not also so sanguine as to believe that the other reform can take place so easily or so quickly. Progress in this will and must go hand in hand with progress in other phases of civic life; it is ridiculous to want a national army even before we are one nation. But I am firmly convinced that we will reach that goal. Without that hope I should have long since quit the service. But in order that we attain that goal more quickly it is above all necessary that in our ranks there should first be aroused and encouraged the knowledge of the goal and the means of attaining it."

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[93] *Ibid*, 350.
[94] *Ibid*, 359.

The Major looks for this change in the army to come from the influence of a strong man. If this man should imperil the freedom, then the Germans must have a taste of imperialism which in their present disunited condition would not after all be a misfortune.[95]

These ideas at once call forth opposition on the part of Münzer when they are reported to him by Wolfgang.[96] "No! No, just the reverse. It is foolish to hope we can ever become one people, if we do not in this way or that create a national army."

In the course of the novel Spielhagen shows how Münzer's ideas carry him too far and his plans border so close to treason that some of his most intimate friends and followers can no longer give him their wholehearted support. The ultimate aim of his plans is for example correctly estimated by Uncle Peter.[97] "Münzer has renounced the party to which he once claimed allegiance. He would change the German political movement into an European one, aye a cosmopolitan one. I have definite information that he is in correspondence with the French, Italian, and Slavonic republicans, and I am convinced that if his ideas prevail we will not arrive at German unity but will get into the devil's pantry."

The closing days of Münzer's active political life are portrayed with excellent skill. He has been defeated and all his plans are a failure, yet he is depicted as remaining true to his convictions, by no means ready to renounce any of the principles which he had advocated and for which he had fought.[98] "With self assurance I can claim I have worked for the freedom and unity of my fatherland. No matter how discontented my friends may be with me, they will not deny this claim. Our revolution is a failure, a miserable failure. Instead of a social or even a republican insurrection we had a border campaign for a romantic constitution that will forever remain on paper. I can only enrich the soil with my blood from which in later times perhaps the

[95] *Ibid*, 472.
[96] *Ibid*, 311.
[97] *Ibid*, 500.
[98] *Ibid*, 666.

state with a better freedom will arise than can now succeed in the shadow of thirty-six thrones which are beyond our reach and of innumerable churches which one still respects as sanctuaries. . . . On that beautiful morning when the banners, which now lie in the dust, wave from all the ramparts and roofs and the golden sun looks down upon a free and united people may you then think of me without sorrow; may you not deny to me the claim: 'He erred in his life and had many faults but he died for his ideal—a united German social Republic'."

After winning lasting fame through his novelettes of peasant life, Berthold Auerbach tried his hand at the "Zeitroman," first in *Neues Leben* (1852). Auerbach had been made to suffer in the Hohenasperg for his enthusiasm for German unity and it is but natural that the desire for national unity should find expression in those works dealing with existing political conditions. In this novel Auerbach casts a proving glance upon the events incident to the Revolution of 48 and then plans for the new life and the new hopes of the future.

The joys which Auerbach himself experienced during the promising days preceding the Frankfurt Assembly is voiced by Baumann, the Turner and teacher.[99] "The happiest day of my life was the sixth of August."

"So then you too expected on that day something from the dreaming political sages of the Paulus Church who first armed their enemies and then with empty hands wanted to make laws and history?"

"My whole soul was filled with joy. I explained to my children that on that day just forty-two years before Germany had given up the name of unity. And when with my school I marched out to the grove where the people with their weapons in their hands were paying homage to their self appointed Vice-Regent, when thousands upon thousands cried 'Hail to a united and free German fatherland' and each pressed the other to his heart, my joy was so great that I cried."

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[99] *Neues Leben*, I, 9.

The reason for the failure of the Revolution is discussed by the aged peasant and Eugene.[100] "Do you know why the Revolution was a failure? Because it was all a deception and a lie. They cried that they wanted a constitution but after all they only wanted a republic and dismemberment." Eugene too agrees with him that victory over the opposing forces could only have meant a republic, or perchance in the end they ought to have forced one of the princes to become Emperor. The peasant nods his head in approval and with mute eloquence points to a large ink-spot on the floor which was designated in the family as the map of Schleswig-Holstein because the old peasant had made it when he received the news of the disaster of that country.

Another character with definite political opinions is Kronauer. To him unity is only possible through powerful leaders.[101] "I do not believe in German unity without a powerful ruler. You know I always ask 'What is man' not 'what ought man to be.' The Germans were never united and are now nowhere united. I received a letter to-day from a friend in America. He writes me that in that country no people are so without unity as the Germans. From England we hear that not even the emigrants are united and unlike the emigrants from other races will not accept even self appointed leaders or representatives. Revolutions among us are always failures from the lack of discipline. No one will allow or submit to a leader."

Eugene will not admit the universal truth of this but Kronauer continued: "Our misfortune is that we are too poetic. The whole movement was a revivication of Schiller coupled with exhalted rhetorical polemics. The hero of the Paulus church was a Schiller afterbirth, a Posa the Second."

Upon the objection of Eugene that one chief fault lay in the fact that the leaders of the old Liberals allowed themselves to be made ministers of the petty states too quickly and robbed the whole movement of able leaders, Kronauer sorrowfully declares that the Germans could do nothing more now than to try and improve and perfect themselves. In this process Eugene does

[100] *Ibid*, I, 37.
[101] *Ibid*, II, 95f.

not believe in the sacrifice of the individual for others. Kronauer believes in such sacrifices only so far as it brings growth and gain to the party so sacrified. "One must have the courage to confess a higher egoism. The individual does not exist for the whole but the whole for the individual." After all he believes that in the effort to attain unity, too much is being made of the people and that the greatest need is for robust men of force who know their own mind.

As Eugene reads his Fichte he deplores the fact that this worthy man, as well as other philosophers have erected system after system but the popular mind knows nothing of it. It holds fast to its conservative opinions. The nation seems doomed to eternal dismemberment because the light of exalted minds only lights up the heights and does not reach to the depths. He is more and more convinced that if those who now so joyfully die were just as ready to live for their neighbor and for the nation there would develop in the hearts of all a unity which would bring about the desired united nation.

The two great novels *Auf de Höhe* (1865) and *Das Landhaus am Rhein* (1869) were such in subject matter that they did not offer Auerbach an opportunity for any direct treatment of German unity.

He again treated a political theme in *Waldfried* (1872). In style this is one of his weakest works yet in many respects its contents is for the present subject one of the most interesting. More a diary than a novel, it gives Auerbach's impressions of men and events in Southern Germany between 1848 and 1872. The growth of national unity in this part of the nation forms a considerable part of the subject matter. He shows the deep rooted suspicion and hatred of the Southern German people giving way to the growing influence of Prussia when that state had proved its right to lead and finally with what joy they hailed the new nation and gladly became a part of it.

The first references to unity occur in connection with the impressions aroused on the approach of the war of 1866. As the war cloud drew near, the Major in his southern patriotism exclaims: "Pshaw! I too once believed in German unity as

they are fond of calling it and I even had hopes of Prussia. But now we will show these impudent mustached Prussian gentlemen what we are made of." [102]

Father Waldfried takes a more pacific view.[103] "I cannot help maintaining that the war of 1866 was forced on the people against their will so far as I can judge and I have spoken to many on the subject. The Prussians did not desire war, the Conservatives did certainly not wish it, for Austria was after all the bulwark of their principles. The Liberals did not want it; nor did the soldiers go forth with cheerful hearts. But necessity had become incarnate in the brain of a single statesman; separation from Austria was the end to be gained and though it went hard that result must be achieved. But the operation was a difficult and painful one."

"Then the news came that the Diet had raised the German colors, black-red-gold. Thus the Diet dared to unfurl the flag which we had always regarded with devotion for the sake of which we had been persecuted, imprisoned or exiled. It seemed as if the holiest of holies had been defiled and dishonored. 'It is the death bed repentance of a sinner who has not enough time left to do good' said Richard who divined the thoughts which were passing through my mind." [104]

The news that Prussia had been successful in the short war seemed like a promise of a more peaceful and prosperous future and our hero exclaims: [105] "Thank God, they have beaten us." The additional step then in this regime of blood and iron should be taken "if Prussia could only march into the South German palaces. That is the way to bring about the proper understanding." "The realization of hopes one could not help entertaining sometimes produces new and unforeseen griefs. Thus it had been with the separation of Austria from the rest of Germany. It had long been recognized as necessary to the proper development of our political life and as an advantage to Austria; and yet

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[102] *Waldfried*, 115.
[103] *Ibid*, 122.
[104] *Ibid*, 123.
[105] *Ibid*, 183.

when it was brought about it seemed more like a death that one had felt it his duty to wish for." [106]

With Austria out of the way, the chief question in the mind of all was, what should be the policy of Prussia.[107] "The question whether a republic or a monarchy should be preferred is about the same as if one were to ask which is better, meat or farinaceous food. All depends upon the manner in which the food is prepared and upon the digestive powers of the stomach." "As there is no one church which alone could save mankind, so there is no one form of government which could alone make all men free. After all everything depended on the honesty and morality of the citizen, and for that reason it could not be maintained that the republican form of government was a guarantee of freedom or that a monarchy necessarily implied a condition of servitude."[108] "The days of Pericles and Scipio are reflected in the soul of every German who has received a classical education, and logically considered a republic is the only form of free government. But neither the life of nature nor that of history is absolutely logical for actual necessity sets aside the systems erected by abstract reason." [109]

About this time Ludwig who has resided in America for many years returns to his fatherland and voices his opinion concerning Germany in the following words: [110] "How do I find Germany? I find only halves of Germany, but they must and will, who knows how soon, become a whole Germany. The German people have become more practical and well-to-do than they were formerly. As far as I have been able to observe there is an abundance of well directed energy, great activity in all that pertains to the trades, to science and to art, and enough liberty to achieve what is still needed to make a complete whole. Let us remain strong and firm and without faltering faithfully labor for the common weal."

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[106] *Ibid*, 193.
[107] *Ibid*, 257.
[108] *Ibid*, 251.
[109] *Ibid*, 326.
[110] *Ibid*, 272.

Richard looks forward for some event that would mark a turning point in the affairs of men or for the appearance of some great man who should utter the command "Come and follow me."[111] Ludwig too believes that liberation can be brought about only by one who possesses a cool head and a firm hand so that without swerving a hair's breadth to either side he can put in the knife where it was needed. When however this man really appears in the person of Bismark he does not come up to their ideal.[112] "How strange it is! Ever since the Congress of Vienna all friends of the fatherland have clamored for a man who with firm hand and shrewd judgment would, regardless of consequences, force Germany into unity. Now that he is with us, they hurl stones at him." Only among the youths does he find acceptance, as is indicated by a Corps student known as Baribal who exclaims: "What! Bismark! If that black devil will bring about unity, I shall sell my soul to him." [113]

"The battle was over and peace had been concluded. Although Austria was separated from Germany there was as yet no real Germany. While the high contracting parties were framing the chief clauses to their treaty the Frenchman who was looking over their shoulders took the pen in his hand and drew a black mark across the page and called it the line of the Main."[114] This line must be effaced and revenge had for old wrongs and it was hoped that the coming encounter with the old foe would have as one of the results the desired unity. As it becomes more and more certain that war with France is inevitable, Father Waldfried rejoices to think that the day had at last arrived in which one might say the hearts of all Germans beat in unison. After having fought and suffered for fifty years he rejoices to witness the fruition of his hopes even though the price paid be war and bloodshed.

On the eve of the declaration of war Ludwig is said to sway the crowd to his will, but of it all we hear only a few neatly

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[111] *Ibid*, 252.
[112] *Ibid*, 257.
[113] *Ibid*, 340.
[114] *Ibid*, 186.

turned figures.[115] "Allow me to make a comparison from my trade. It requires many strong posts to make the scaffolding of a building. The departed martyrs for German unity were the scaffolding. It has been torn down and now we behold the building pure and simple, firmly and regularly built and appropriately adorned. Or another simile. Have you ever observed a raft in the valley stream? It floats along slowly and lazily but when it reaches the weir it hurries. And then is the time to find out whether the withes are strong and whether they hold the planks firmly together. The German logs must now pass through the weir. There is a cracking and a straining but they hold fast to each other and right merrily do they float into the Rhine and out into the ocean."

Father Waldfried is summoned by his prince and in the conversation between the two, however improbable the relation and ideas expressed may be, Auerbach has introduced many a patriotic sentiment on German unity. Apropos to nothing in particular Waldfried tells the Prince: "The growth of the idea of German unity has been in geometric progression. During the period of the rotten restoration from the battle of Leipzig down to 1830 those who entertained it might have been counted by the hundreds, or at most by thousands, and they were to be found only among the cultured or learned class. After 1830 they were counted by hundreds of thousands, and after 1848 by millions; and to-day the thought of German unity is alive in all who know that they are Germans. One system of laws within our borders, a united army and a united representation in foreign lands. The forest is one united whole and yet every tree has its individual life. The people do not believe so, that is, they do not feel so to-day, but they will to-morrow. Deeds, deeds of sacrifice, are the most powerful instructors; they teach men what they should think and even find a voice for what has been slumbering in their souls, for what through pride and anger or through want of courage they have not even dared to think of." [116]

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[115] *Ibid*, 322.
[116] *Ibid*, 327f.

"When I think of the time before 1830 I see opposed to each other extravagant enthusiasm and impotence, courageous virtue and cowardly vice, chaste and devoted faith in the ideals, and mockery, ridicule and frivolous disbelief in all that was noble, the one side cherishing righteousness, the other scoffing at it. In other words on the one side Uhland, on the other Metternich."

The prince asks Waldfried: "Do you candidly and heartily desire the continued existence of my sovereign dynasty?" "Sovereign, no; dynasty, yes. I have fought, thought and lived for this during my whole lifetime. If we are to gain a real fatherland, the princes must relinquish their claim to sovereignty, that belongs to the whole."

"You are an enthusiastic friend of Prussia?"

"I am; for in Prussia I recognize the backbone of our national existence. She is not prepossessing; but steadfast and reliable. Prussia saved Germany. She has dallied a great while before claiming her reward for that service but at last she receives it."

The prince is represented as offering Waldfried the presidency of the Cabinet. "As a first condition I requested the Prince to give me a written assurance that he resign all privileges which would interfere with German unity." After some hesitation the Prince replied: "Here is my hand. I have a right to do this and desire to be the first to have the victorious King of Prussia as Emperor."

After the war was over and the victory won Waldfried cannot restrain his joy. "The blood of South and North has been shed together. The union of the German people is now indissoluble." [117] "Oh fortunate posterity! You cannot know or appreciate our feelings during those days. We had long cherished these aspirations for our country, for a united Germany; the less we could hope for their realization, the deeper they lay in our hearts. Patriotism was like religious martyrdom. Our country did not return our love. On the contrary it was requited by hate and persecutions from those higher in station

[117] *Ibid*, 404.

and by neglect and ridicule from the lowly. And in spite of all for more than fifty years we stood firm and true without hope of reward."[118] "Yes, treasured in secret and worn like an amulet of magic power for the sake of which we suffered are the colors of the new Confederation. At first the thought pained me, but perhaps it is all for the best. The empire which is now being established is not quite the one of which we sang and dreamed or for the love of which we were thrown into dungeons. But it is full of a new and vigorous life and instead of the golden glitter of poesy we have the simple white of prose."

Besides the more or less definite treatment of national unity just noticed there remains to be noticed two forms of indefinite treatment frequently found in the novel of the century. One of these may be called the definite mention of unity, the other veiled reference to it.

By the first is meant the simple and direct use of the words "national unity" without any attempt or intent to treat it in any way. It usually occurs in three forms.

First, as a type word for some goal that seems unattainable, or for some thing or idea that seems just beyond reach. For example Avé-Lallemant in *Mechulle-Leut'* depicts some thieves trying to gain entrance to a villa. They find every effort blocked and one of them exclaims: "Curse it all. We'll get in by the time Germany is united."[119] In Raus' *Kaiser und Pabst* one character is worried over the obstinacy of a friend and exclaims: "It would be easier to unite the German states than to persuade him to do my will."[120] Or again in Brunow's *Der Christ:* "That is as hard to find as German unity." [121]

Second, as a type word for something that is romantic, dreamy, or uncertain. In Ring's *Verirrt und Erlöst* occurs the sentence: "That is almost as enticing as the dream of a united

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[118] *Ibid*, 481.
[119] *Mechulle-Leut'*, 218.
[120] *Kaiser und Pabst*, II, 74.
[121] *Der Christ*, I, 132.

Germany." [122] Or again in Hoefer's *In der Irre:* "He has about as clear an idea of that as our youth have of German unity." [123]

Third, as one of the necessary requisites for perfection or success. In Lange's *Nach Zwanzig Jahren:* "Curse upon this dismembered Germany that forces our poets to write for their neighbors and not for our nation." [124] Or in Rupius' *Ein Deutscher:* "That were possible if this Germany were an American United States." [125]

The three uses of the word just noticed seems to have been widespread. It occurs frequently in the novel, can very probably be found in the drama and was often used in conversation as a figure of speech. Dr. Klein writes that he remembers "hearing it so used very early in his life and during the fifth and sixth decades it was quite frequently heard in conversation. When so used it was not necessarily indicative of a patriotic heart, or of a mind which was striving to solve the problem of states union, but it simply became a catchword to express failure, hindrance, or indefiniteness."

By veiled references to unity is meant frequent statements like, "We are a nation of brothers," "Brotherhood of our race," "We all speak one language," "Alas! that I must fight against my brothers." There is no doubt that such statements were frequently written with little or no reference to real national unity, or were used in the broader cosmopolitan idea of the brotherhood and unity of the human race. But in the greater majority of cases one cannot help but feel that they were written with the dream of a united fatherland clearly in mind, and that they recalled the thought in the minds of their readers. When for example the mother in Norden's *Dunkle Wege* tells her son concerning the Austrian children, his playmates, with whom he has quarreled: "Yes my son but remember that they are your brothers and sisters. You all speak the same language. You should not quarrel with each other. If Karl wants to be king,

[122] *Verirrt und Erlöst*, 52.
[123] *In der Irre*, II, 241.
[124] *Nach Zwanzig Jahren*, 109.
[125] *Ein Deutscher*, III, 39.

you should not insist on your merits, but become a faithful prince," we have a case which can only mean one thing.

Such references are very numerous, recurring frequently in the same novel or in successive novels. The following authors seem inclined to such a use: Backer, Börne, Borland, Brachvogel, Duller, Heller, Hesekiel, Mörike, Mügge, Prutz, Schücking, Star, Stolle and Zschokke.

The frequent association of the terms freedom and unity (Freiheit und Einheit) led to a mixing of the two to such an extent that often one is inclined to believe that an author sometimes writes of freedom when with it he was associating the name of unity. While this occurs more frequently in political pamphlets which were subject to a closer scrutiny on the part of the censor, there can be no question but that such smuggling was also usual in the novel.

It has been usually believed that the attitude of the police-state toward political agitation and the suppressive measures introduced, was one reason why the idea of national unity did not receive greater treatment in literature. This reason however cannot be considered as a very potent one. The very fact that political pamphlets on unity, published over the authors' signature, circulated with considerable freedom and brought only in a few cases persecution would seem to indicate that any treatment such as could have been given in the novel would have passed unnoticed. The literary writers who did come under the ban were in almost every case persecuted for real or fancied political agitation proper and not for any political opinion on German unity they may have expressed in purely literary works. Each decade brought greater freedom, though not complete freedom even after 1870, in the expression of political ideas and the rigid censorship of the earlier decades was not sufficient cause to deter authors from expressing their opinions.

There were two other far more potent causes to prevent a widespread expression of the subject in literature.

The thought of political unity was one that remained for all time largely a poet's dream, and so could not entice many

authors to any treatment such as would have been in place in the novel. This was especially true during the first three decades when the idea was too new to offer a perspective for any sort of definite treatment. At this time the Romantic writers, and the nation as a whole for that matter, surrounded it with the nimbus of their poetic fancy and so it remained in the literary world at least in the decades that followed—a Romantic dream. The positive demands of men like Pfitzer, Schulz and Münch made a profound impression on all non-Austrian states but it brought comparatively little change in the treatment the question received in literature except that Prussia came more and more to the front as the possible leader in unity. The events of 1848 and the years of reaction that followed tended to drive the subject again into the realm of dreamland and there it remained until the keen mind and iron hand of Bismark found a means of attaining political unity and so changed the dream into a reality, a reality which in many ways bore little or no resemblance to the dream.

The disunion of Germany was in itself a powerful cause for no extensive treatment. For years no one state represented the national hope of all the German states, and there was in the main no truly national patriotism, as there was no one state about which it could centre. So many writers, if patriotic at all, were filled with a purely local patriotism and did not direct their thoughts or eyes beyond the interests of their own petty states. The great number of "Localdichter" and the great mass of literary productions which had meaning and interest only in limited districts is sufficient proof of this. To be sure, later in the century there grew up a recognition of the necessity of a combination of local and national patriotism, but this seems to have been appreciated only by a few, among them the better writers such as Alexis, Scheffel and Freytag.

The number of authors, however, who do treat it definitely or mention it briefly, represent a very fair proportion and are indicative of the prominent place the question held in the thought of the day. German national unity was not the creation of any one individual. The German nation, or rather the thought of all

Germans through the ages, was the real creator. German history and German thought kept alive the ancient spirit that filled the old Germania of Tacitus, and when the time came it demanded its old integrity. Through the ages the thought was embodied and kept sacred by native tongue, song and poetry, and in this embodiment and preservation the German novel of the nineteenth century played no small part.

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